GUID
TO
The True Religion:
OR,
A DISCOURS
Directing to make a wise CHOICE of that Religion Men venture their Salvation upon:

Seasonable for these Tim wherein there are such Diversities of Opinions and Wayes of Religion

To inform the Ignorant, to resol Wavering, and to confirm the We

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By J. C. M. A. of T. C. C.

Josh. 24. 15.

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, Choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the G But as for me, and my House, we will serve the L

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A Premonition to the Reader, ſhewing the occaſion and intendment of the *Diſcourſe*.

Courteous Reader,

THere is no good Chriſtian, but is ready upon all juſt occaſions to expreſs his ſad reſentment of the woful Diviſions and dangerous Errors, wherewith the Churches of Chriſt in theſe Kingdoms have been for many years paſt, and ſtill are ſo diſtracted; for notwithſtanding that our civil Wars are through the mercy of God ended, yet our Religious jarrs and rents are not healed. Indeed, how can any pious Soul conſider the great diſhonour done thereby to the

Holy Name of God, the reproach to the Christian Religion, the great scandal to those sometimes famous Churches (which are now, hereby become infamous through the World) yea, the apparent ruine threatned by these things, and not break out into sad lamentation for the same! Surely this is a Lamentation, and shall be for a Lamentation.

And although the serious consideration of those evils, in order to the repairing and healing of them, and the preventing the publick ruine threatned to the Church and State thereby, belongeth to the wisdome and zeale of those that be in place of eminency, and are vested with power and authority requisite thereunto;

yet

yet private Christians in a lower station and capacity, cannot but have their eyes upon the sad influence those things have upon their dearest Friends and Neighbours with whom they converse, and in their behalf meditate upon some remedy for the same. Certain it is, that the malignant influence these things have on the common sort is very sad; whilst gazing on those sad contesting matters of Religion, Some continue meer Scepticks, *ever wavering, and not knowing what way of Religion to chuse, and so neglect to be of any: Some are professed Atheists, or profane Wretches: Others be seduced into dangerous Errours as* Popery, Socinianism, Quakerism, *&c.*

Many ingaged in contentions they know not why, nor for what: And the greatest part of Christians wofully stumbled in their Profession.

The intendment of these Papers, is to propose some help against those evils, and to guide and direct those that are apt to miscarry through occasion of the diversities of Opinions and Wayes found amongst us. Wherein they are first excited to make a wise Choyce of that Religion they venture their Eternal Salvation upon, and are informed how to do it. Indeavours are used to fix and establish them in the Truth of the Christian Religion, and to acquaint them with the great and Fundamental Doctrines and Duties thereof,

necessary

necessary unto Salvation, which have been owned by all Christians and Churches in all places and ages; and to perswade to believe and obey them, as that whereupon their eternal safety depends. Then our Discourse descends to Points of a secondary and inferior Nature that are controverted amongst wise and godly Christians, and directions are laid down how to finde out the right and safe way for Faith and practice in such things (especially when we are necessitated to hold forth a Profession of our selves therein) Wherewith is shewed also what tenderness and respect, is to be used toward those that differ from us in those things, whilst, in the mean time, we carry it at a greater

distance with those that err Fundamentally, and subvert the Christian Faith and Religion. All which Counsels being evidenced to be good and wholsome, will manifestly declare, Those to be the most approved and judicious Christians, who (under all those great changes and revolutions which have been amongst us of later times) have especially exercised their zeal for the maintaining of the Fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, and the practice and power of Godliness; as also for the preserving the peace of the Church, and love and union amongst Christians: whilst in the mean time they have shewed greatest moderation and condescension, towards those that differ

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controverted Points of a lower Nature, even to a degree of complyance; also with the stream of the times in some things, which seem in themselves less desirable and inconvenient (provided in their Consciences they judge them not to be sinful) if conducing to the furtherance of the gospel, the peace of the Churches and Salvation of Souls.

Indeed this will be judged by some rash and censorious Spirits to be Hypocrisie, Time-serving, or Self-seeking, & such persons may be branded for Temporizers, Turn-coats or Apostates, or what not; but when things shall be considered in calmnes and Sobriety, Such will be found the greatest friends of Christ and the Chri-

Christian Religion: and such actions most consonant to Scripture commands, and to the examples of the Saints recorded therein; whereas such as are found departing from any Fundamental and generally confessed points of Faith or Practice, These imputations may be more warrantably charged upon them.

Reader, *Let these sad and woful differences, errours, and debates, provoke thee to examine the grounds thy profession is built upon; to study more the verity and excellency of the Christian Religion and be better established therein; to understand, believe, love, and obey the great and necessary Principles thereof; humbly to seek of God the discovery of his minde*

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in things more dark and controverted; and to exercise more Christian love and charity to those that are not of the same perswasion or practice with thee therein; And then, thou wilt be secured from the danger of those evils; yea, they will prove advantageous to thy greatest good, although intended by Satan for thy hurt. To help *thee herein, is the intendment and Designe of this Discourse, in order whereunto, the blessing of the Lord is humbly implored to go along with same.*

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CHAP. I.

Religion the grand concernment of Man in this World, great differences about the necessity of a wise and deliberate Chuing ones Religion. The counsel of Joshua *to the* Israelites, *applyed to us. A proposition laid down, which is the Subject matter of the following Discourse.*

THe business of Religion is the grand concernment that all of us are sent into the World to mind, and therefore God hath, in the very framing of mans nature, laid so deep an impression thereof in us, that there's no Nation so barbarous and inhumane, but doth place this amongst the greatest matters, that they judge themselves to be interessed in; insomuch as, some observe, Religion is more proper to man then Reason. All men, and only men have a smatch of Religion; whereas some shew of reason is found in many Beasts. *Lactant. de ira Dei, Solus homo sapientia instructus est, ut Religionem solus intelligat, & hæc est hominis atque brutorum vel præcipua vel sola distantia.*

But as it is a thing all do profess themselves interessed in; so theres nothing in all the World, men are at greater difference about; some taking up one Religion and some another, as pleases themselves best; yea each Nation almost have chosen a peculiar Deity, as we find in Scripture, one serving *Baal*, another *Dagon*, others *Moloch* or *Astaroth*, *&c.* Some worshipping the *Sun*, others the *Moon* or *Starrs*, and almost every creature whence they received any benefit; and some have not been wanting that have adored the Devil himself. How greatly then doth it behove every one to make a wise choice of that God he intends to serve, and of that Religion he means to profess in the world, and to live and dye in. That he may first chuse the true Religion and true God, and then cleave to him with full purpose of heart, as *Barnabas* exhorts, *Acts* 11. 23. And the rather because of the great importance thereof; Mans eternal happiness or misery depends on the right knowing and acknowledging God, and serving him; or his mistake above it: according to the witness of Christ himself, *John* 17. 3. *This is life eternal to know* (so as to acknowledge unto

unto godlineſs.) *Thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.*

We read in the ſtory of the *Iſraelites* the vanity of mans nature in matters of Religion; though no Nation under the whole Heavens had greater diſcoveries of the true God then they had; both by his Word and Oracles, inſtructing them from Heaven, and giving them his Law on Mount *Sinai*, and teaching them by his Prophets, the infallible interpreters of that Law; as alſo by his mighty works, bringing them out of *Egypt* by his outſtretched Arm, working ſignes and wonders, dividing the Red Sea, giving them water out of the Rock, and Bread and Fleſh from Heaven in a Wilderneſs, and guiding them by a Cloud of Smoak, and a Pillar of Fire: yet how apt were they to turn away from God, and to worſhip other Gods, even of the *Egyptians* and *Canaanites*, whom God caſt out before them. A pregnant inſtance whereof we have in the buſineſs of the Golden Calf, though but forty dayes before, they heard the Law proclaimed in the greateſt ſolemnity that ever was, even by the Miniſtry of An-

gels with Thunder, Lightning, and Earthquake, which wrought such a plyableness in their Spirits, that they professed, whatever the Lord should speak to them, That they would do, *Deut.* 5.27. Yet when *Moses* was but a while withdrawn from them upon the Mount, they quickly turned aside, and made them a Calf to worship, after the manner of *Egypt*. This being observed by *Joshua* his Successor, he became jealous over them with a godly jealousie; and being fearful that when he was gon from them, they should do the like, He indeavours to establish them in the true Religion, and to bind them to the Lord in the strongest bonds, *Josh.* 24. He bids them verse 15. *Chuse deliberately what God they would serve*, directing them by his own example; and then when they had deliberately chosen *Jehovah* for their God, he binds them unto him by a solemn covenant, *verse* 25. And sets up a lasting remembrance of it.

These things are written for our instruction, and do shew what a Spirit there is in us, even an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, as well as in them formerly (as the Apostle shews,

Heb.

Heb. 3. 12. Though we have as full discoveries of God as they had, and greater means of knowledge by Gospel-light, to know God and Jesus Christ: yet our hearts are equally fickle and ready to forsake God, and the true Religion, and (as the Apostle taxeth the *Galathians*) to turn to another gospel and another Christ then we have received, yea to another God, the World, our Lusts, or Satan, to serve them more then the true God. Therefore this counsel of *Joshua* may be as seasonable to us now as to them formerly, *viz.* To chuse deliberately and seriously what God we will serve; and then to resolve to cleave unto him for ever: or wisely to chuse that Religion, we will profess in the World, and venture our salvation upon; and then to labour to be established and fixed therein, so as by no storms of temptations we be removed.

The urging of this Counsel upon unsettled and wavering Souls, being the intendment and designe of this discourse, suited to these fluctuating and shaking times, It may be contracted into this insuing proposition, which shall be more fully dilated on, in the following Chapters, *viz.*

That it is a great point of wisdom for a Man to make a right Choice of that Religion he means to take up and profess in the World, that he intends to live and dye in, and to venture his eternal Salvation upon.

CHAP. II.

Shewing wherein this wise Chusing ones Religion stands, and what acts concur thereunto.

HAving laid down the proposition which is the ground of our *Discourse* in the former chapter, we come now to inquire concerning the nature of that *choice* wherein it stands, and what things necessarily must concurr to make a wise choice of that Religion, we intend to profess in the World.

Election or chusing (in a general sense) is an act of the will, proceeding from the previous knowledge and judgment of the understanding, whereby amongst divers wayes or means propounded for the attainment of some *End*, it doth resolve upon some one above the rest; that it will adhere

here [illegible] of for that purpose.

In particular, *Chusing* ones *Religion*, is also an Act of the will arising from the previous knowledg and judgment of the understanding (discerning the nature of the thing) whereby amongst the many different Religions (or wayes of serving and pleasing God, and of attaining unto happiness with him) that are found in the World, a man doth pitch and resolve upon one above all the rest (and with rejection of all others) with full purpose to adhere unto it, to live and dye in it, and even venture a mans Salvation and happiness on it.

Here are 3 Acts wherein this right chuseing ones Religion doth stand, to be explained in order.

1. An act of the *understanding* judging and discerning the nature of the thing that the will chuseth, and its excellency above all things that come in competition with it; for to a right choyce of the will, the understanding and judgment must percede; it must know the nature of it, and discern it good, or else it's but a blind choyce, not becomming a reasonable crea-

ture, and a man may [illegible] evil as well as good. The will when it acts regularly follows the Dictate of the understanding; this tells what is good, and then that chuses, as the Palat judges of what it tasts, and then the stomach or appetite craves it; so must the understanding go before her, and discern the nature, verity and goodness of that Religion, as also the falsness, vanity and dangerousness of other Religions, before the will can make a right choice of it. Man, being a religious creature, by the common instinct of his natural conscience, is moved strongly to worship and serve a Deity, (as we see in all Nations of the Earth) much more when he is further stirred up by a divine instinct. Now we should consider as men (as the Prophets phrase is) and not exert actions of highest importance without understanding and reason, worshipping we know not what (as Christ taxes the *Samaritans*, *John* 4.) but give God a reasonable service, knowing what God we serve, and what Religion we take up; and not taking up the next at hand, at adventure, (as most men do) that Religion professed where they live, and commended to them by Education,

cate[illegible] but understanding what we do therein. And therefore men that act according to reason, will look into the Religions in the World, and judg which is best amongst them; or rather into the Word and Oracles of God himself, for they best discover what God is, and how he will be worshipped. Therefore if there be any such thing, as Divine Oracles in the World, wherein God hath revealed his will concerning matters of faith and worship, we should have special recourse unto them. Now that the holy Scriptures (commonly called the Bible) are such, that is, *the Oracles of the God of Heaven*, wherein he directs us in the knowledge and worship of himself, and in the way of Religion; This may appear even to those that have not yet taken upon them any profession of Religion by such Infallible demonstrations, as reason cannot contradict, *viz.* From these characters imprinted on them which shew them to be of God, from the miracles wrought to confirm them, from that spirit of holiness seen in such as seriously believe them, from the accomplishment of a great part of those things revealed therein, even such things

as

as were utterly invisible [illegible] to created understandings, *&c.* And therefore there should be an exact consideration in the judgment and understanding of a man of that Religion revealed in the Scriptures. He should 1. Take a particular view of the principal Doctrines, the great mysteries of faith, and duties of godlinesse taught therein, not taking all in the lump together, but having a distinct knowledge of them. He whose Religion is in the gross only, and hath no distinct apprehensions of the particular doctrines of faith and duties of godlinesse, which that Religion teaches, he hath no Religion at all; for how can these Doctrines influence his heart and life to make him fear, and love God truly, and lead him to the power and practice of godlinesse, if not distinctly known and discerned by him? Then 2. He must discern the *verity* and *certainty* of these Doctrines, that he may venture his soul upon them, knowing him in whom he hath believed; for which end it's exceeding necessary to be conversant in those Treatises which prove the verity of the Christian Religion and of the Scriptures (wherein it is set down)

down [illegible] may be extant in our own Language. Without this a man shall never hold fast his Religion, especially in trying times. 3. He should know the *excellency* thereof, that its such a Religion as tends most to the magnifying of God, and giving glory unto him, to the advancement of man to true happiness in the love and favor of his God, and nearest communion with him, and fullest conformity unto him. He should often look upon the sublimity of the mysteries, the purity of the precepts, excellency of the Rewards, and dreadfulness of the punishments. And thus the understanding preceding in discerning and judging the Religion which is to be chosen, is one Act in this *Election*.

2. Act, After the understanding doth thus present the true Religion before us in the certainty, glory and excellency of it. Then the next Act is for the *Will* to elect, chuse, and imbrace it, solemnly to espouse this Religion, and say, It shall be mine; It's that I am resolved to profess, and to venture my eternal salvation upon, what ever inconveniences I may meet with in the profession thereof; what ever disgra-

ces,

ces, reproaches, [illegible] yet this Religion I will be of, and this God I will serve. We must sit down and consider what it will cost us to be Christians, and then espouse the Christian Religion, and take it for better for worse, embrace the cross it threatens, as well as the Crown it promises; for so our Lord warned his Disciples, telling them *he that will come after me, and be my Disciple, must deny himself*, (in his dearest lusts and sins, nay, in his estate and life sometime) *and take up his cross*, (of afflictions and persecution) *and follow him*, (in a way of holiness and purity in the straight way.) And then he will give him *a Crown of life*, he shall have an hundred fold in this life, with persecution (that is, the comfort of an hundred fold, if he miss of such increase in the same kinde) and eternal glory in the World to come. Now we must sit down & consider what we do, as (*Luke* 14.28.31.) Christ teaches by the parable of him that builds a Tower, and of the King that goes to warfare. Now thus to chuse our Religion, to espouse the Christian Faith for better for worse, to take the sweet with the bitter, the Cross with the Crown; This

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is another Act, wherein this choice ſtands.

3. Act Is a ſettled purpoſe, and full Reſolution to live and dye therein, to adhere and cleave thereto, even to the end, to be faithful to the Death; to cleave to the Lord with full purpoſe of heart; as we read *Joſhua* his reſolution, I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord; we are reſolved, (who ever depart from *Jehovah*) we will cleave unto him. And as the Diſciples, *John 6.* when many forſook Chriſt and the Chriſtian Religion; their Lord ſaith unto them, and *will ye alſo go away? Peter* anſwers in the name of the reſt, *whether ſhall we go, for thou haſt the words of Eternal life.* Alack, if we draw back from the Lord, his ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in us, we draw back unto perdition; but if we continue in the faith, we ſhall then have the Crown of life. Life and Death are before us herein, as *Moſes* told the *Iſraelites*, if we ſerve the Lord and fear him and cleave unto him, then life; but if we turn from him, and his truth and wayes, then Death; all a mans righteouſneſs ſhall be forgotten, he ſhall dye in his ſins.

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Thus in these three Acts stands the right chusing of a mans Religion.

CHAP. III.

Considerations evidencing it a principal point of wisdom for a man to make a right choyce of that Religion he professes in the World, and ventures his Eternal Salvation upon.

HAving shewed, wherein this wise chusing ones Religion stands, and what Acts must concur thereto, We come next to demonstrate it to be such a principal point of wisdom for a man to make a right choice of his Religion he professes in the world and ventures his Salvation upon. This may be evinced from the ensuing Considerations.

1. The *Necessity* for a man to be of some Religion; and if so, wisdome should direct to make choyce of the best. Now it's necessary to be of some Religion; we cannot live without God (*Acts* 17. 28. *In him we live, move, and have our being.*) And is it not fit then we should ackcowledge God and worship him? In the very framing of the

the nature of man, there are ſuch principles of Religion ingraven in him, that cannot be razed out, that have taught the very Heathens to worſhip a Deity; ſo that we ſhould be worſe then Heathens, yea, become very beaſts, and below men, if we ſhould not be of ſome Religion: Beſides it is the expreſs command of God, by his written Laws given to the Sons of Men, that they adore, worſhip and ſerve him; he expects it as an homage from them, and will not looſe his glory; Such Atheiſts are accurſed by him, as caſt off all Religion, and live without God in the World: And though ſome ſuch Atheiſts have been found, who in their proſperity forget God, whilſt they can better ſhift without him: yet in their miſeries and dangers, they have been forced to acknowledge God and call upon him, as the Mariners in the Ship with *Jonah*, *&c.* Now if it be ſo, Is it not fit to chuſe the true God, and the true Religion?

2. There are many falſe Religions in the World, and we may ſoon be impoſed on and deluded, if we make not a wiſe choice of our Religion; There be many Lords and many gods ſo called (ſaith

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the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. 5.) though to us, there is but one living and true God; There's many wayes of Religion, Heatheniſm, Mahometaniſm, Judaiſm, and Chriſtianity; and amongſt Chriſtians, how many different wayes this day? ſcarce to be numbred, and therefore we had need to make a good choice. The greateſt part of the World were deceived in former times of old, the whole world almoſt followed falſe gods, except *Iſrael.* At this day, ſome obſerve, if the World be divided into thirty parts, nineteen of them are Heathen Idolaters, ſix be *Mahometans*; ſome (though inconſiderable) *Jews*; and only the other five parts of the thirty be Chriſtians: and how many different wayes be amongſt them? Proteſtants, Papiſts, *Muſcovites*, *Grecks* in *Europe*, (beſides multitudes in other parts of the World.) and theſe admitting many ſub-diviſions amongſt themſelves; Therefore we had need to make a wiſe choice.

3. It's that whereupon our greateſt intereſt depends; on the right chuſing ones Religion, or our miſtakes about it, eternal happineſs or miſery, life or death depend. *Deut.* 32. 46, 47. In things of great importance

portance men use much deliberation, and make the wisest choice they can, how necessary is it here? That opinion or dream that every man may be saved by his own Religion, if he be true to it, is more becoming *Turks* then *Christians*. They say there are three Banners whereby men are conducted to Heaven, *Moses's*, *Christs* and *Mahomets*; but we Christians know no other way to Salvation but one, *viz.* by faith in Jesus Christ; *for there's no other name under Heaven to be saved by, but by the name of Jesus Christ*, *Act.* 4. 12. Indeed many lesser differences may be amongst them that hold *that* one Faith: They may hold the head Christ, and yet differ in small things with safety to their Souls; if they build on the foundation and corner-stone Jesus Christ, (heartily believing the principles of the Christian Faith, and living according to them) though they add thereto the Hay, Stubble, and wood of smaller errors, they may be saved notwithstanding these. 1 *Cor.* 3.15. Salvation may be had amongst several sorts of Christians, that all agree in the great Articles of the Christian Faith, and live piously and charitably, whether *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*,

nists, *Arminians*, *Anabaptists*, *Episcopal*, *Presbyterian*, *Independent*, *&c.* These are not different Religions, but different forms of the same Religion, wherein the children of the same Father, are dressed up in different habits. But where any differ in fundamentals, and even turn to another Religion, to another Gospel, or Christ (as the Apostle speaks to the *Galathians*,) as too many *Sects* amongst us, are found to do, *viz.* *Papists*, *Socinians*, *Quakers*, *&c.* (Those I mean who are througly such, not all that ignorantly adhere to them,) it would be foolish charity to flatter them with hopes of Salvation, in such wayes, (if living and dying according to those corrupt principles,) because they are in the number of those *Damnable* Heresies the Scripture speaks of. Now this being clear, that Salvation dependeth upon espousing the right Religion; What wisdome is it to make a good choice?

4. Because else if one should *happen* on the true Religion, he would never be *True* unto it, unless he take it up on such a right choice, as before was spoken of; we cannot be *Serious Christians*, nor *thorough* Christians

Christians, but by halves only; nor *Constant*, holding out to the End, without this right choice.

(1) *Not serious Christians.* Such as take up a Religion they know not what, and on grounds they know not why, will be but sleighly and formal in it; a little of outside profession they may have, but the power of it will be wanting. Thus the common sort of Christians, that take not up Religion on a wise choice, understanding what it is, and discerning the verity and excellency of it, but because it is professed in the countrey where they live, injoyned by the Lawes of the Land, and commended by the example of Others, whom they esteem wise and holy, alack, how formal and sleighty are they therein; not considering the glory of the great God that made them and redeemed them, is concerned therein, and that the salvation of their own souls depends on it: Whereas such as make a wise choice out of knowledg and discerning, serve God with all their heart and strength and soul, they rest not in the former, but labour in the power of godliness. Religion is their main business in the World.

(2.) Nor *thorough* Christians, but only by the halves, (as *Agrippa almost perswaded to be Christians*,) They will follow Christ a little way, and perform some of the out-side and easie parts of Religion: but when they hear some hard sayings (as the *Capernaits*) or some difficult duties pressed on them that cross flesh and blood and worldly interest, they will except them, and say, *in this thing the Lord be merciful to me*, &c. These are like the *Scribe, not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but never shall come there*; like *Herod*, that reform many things, but not all, will pick and chuse where they please. Oh that this were not the case of many called Christians! And this because they understand not aright what the Christian Religion is, and take it not upon good grounds, therefore they fall short: whereas he that understands what an holy Religion it is, and what great duties it requires, and casts up before hand the inconveniences, losses and sufferings he may meet with, comparing them with the recompence of reward, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, he will go through-stitch, will follow God fully

fully, and will be altogether a Christian.

3. Nor *Constant*, but turning away from it upon every Temptation. Such are ever wavering and halting betwixt two, as the *Israelites* of old betwixt *Jehovah* and *Baal*. If ereſie, ſeducement, and the power of deluſions come amongſt ſuch, how do they turn away from that Religion they have imbraced by companies, and turn Runnagados; or if the heat of perſecution ſcorch them, *they wither away becauſe they have no Root. Mat.* 13. We have had too ſad experience of this amongſt the giddy unſtable ſort of Chriſtians in our times, when God had let looſe errors and hereſies amongſt us, (to try who were ſound and ſincere, and who not) how many were carryed away as with a flood? And if *Popery* ſhould prevail again, or *Mahometaniſm*, through the conquering Sword of the *Turks*, one may tremble to think whither ſuch ungrounded Chriſtians may be carryed: *Whereas* on the other hand the Chriſtian that takes up his Religion on good grounds through a wiſe choice, knowing what, and in whom he hath believed, will through grace ſtand ſtrongly

as the House built upon the Rock, *Mat.* 7. When the Winds blew and the Waves beat, he stands; *The gates of Hell shall not prevail against such.* Therefore we see what a great point of wisdom it is, for a man to make a wise choice of that Religion he takes up; else he will not be true unto it; he will not be a serious Christian, nor a thorough, nor a constant Christian, and then as good be none at all. It will nothing avail them unto Salvation to imbrace the true Religion, no more then it did profit the *Israelites* of old, to have the Temple of the Lord amongst them; or the *Philistims* to have the Ark of the Covenant with them, it will but increase their condemnation.

These Considerations are sufficient (without insisting upon any other) to evidence the truth of our proposition, and to commend to us this great duty, viz. *The wise chusing of that Religion we profess in the World, that we mean to live and dye in, and to venture our Eternal Salvation upon.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IIII.

Wherein the Practice of this Duty is insisted on, and Directions given how to chuse the true Religion amonst so many as are in the World. All other Religions being rejected, The Christian Religion is evidenced to be the only true Religion.

WE are now come to the practical part of our Discourset o shew how this may be reduced into action, that we have been treating on, but in *words hitherto*; Let every one that God hath given the understanding of a man unto, be induced to make a wise choice of that Religion he ventures his eternal Salvation upon.

This discourse is intended only for such as be resolved to be of some Religion, and will not live as *Atheists*. As for them that will not be of any Religion at all, but live without God in the World, only live to eat and drink, and work and sleep, and mind their sensual pleasures, they degenerate from the nature of men and are even turned unto Beasts; foolish are they and ignorant (to use the *Psalmists* words

Psal. 73.) and even in this point as Beasts, as far below men as *Nebuchadnezzar* was when he *did eat grass as the Oxen, and couched amongst the Beasts*; for such violate the very Law of Nature, which hath taught all Nations, how ever rude and barbarous, to take up some profession of Religion. They transgress also the written Law of God, which he hath given in his word, and will judge men by, at the last day, which requires solemn worship, and service from the Sons of men. They bring themselves directly under the curse or imprecation, *Jer.* 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name. The wicked shall be turned into Hell, with all the Nations that forget God*, Psalm 9. 17. As they say to God now, depart from us, we will not know thy wayes: so they shall hear God say to them shortly, *Depart from me ye Cursed*, &c. Nor do I speak to such base and low Spirits, as take up their Religion on trust from others, and pinn their faith upon the sleeves of those, to whom they have subjected their judgments and consciences, upon account of any worldly, or corrupt interest: But to such noble Spirits, as with

with the *Bereans* will take pains to *search the Scriptures*, and use all Gods appointed means to inform themselves, that they may venture their souls on a sure bottom. *Consider* as men, and make a wise choice of that Religion you venture your Salvation upon. Its not sufficient that it be delivered to you by Tradition from your Ancestors; that you have learned it by education from Godly Parents; that it is commanded by the Laws of the Land wherein you live, and commanded by the practice of wise and pious persons, whom you reverence: but make a wise choice for your selves; Labour to understand distinctly the several Doctrines, and mysteries of faith, and duties of Godliness contained therein; and to know the verity and excellency of it; and so take it up upon deliberation, weighing both the conveniencies and inconveniencies of it; Comparing the sufferings, losses, reproaches, persecutions you meet withall; with the reward and Crown promised; and so make a wise choice of your Religion, resolving to live and dye therein, to adhere to it to the end, and be faithful even to Death.

This

This is a duty neceſſary and ſeaſonable to be preſſed, ſome have not yet choſen their Religion. It's to be feared there's too many, not only of the younger ſort, but of the more antient, who (according to the proverb) have their Religion to chuſe. Some have made ſome kinde of choice, but need to be confirmed and eſtabliſhed therein upon good grounds, and to be ſtirred up to be true to the true Reli, gion they profeſs, even to be ſerious, thorough and conſtant Chriſtians.

Make this choice then ſpeedily, for this is the buſineſs you come into the World about, to know and acknowledge, to worſhip and glorifie God; and your Salvation depends upon it. Live not without God any longer, but acknowledg him that made and redeemed you, that feedes and preſerves you, and learn how to ſerve him acceptably. *Do it wiſely*, leſt you be deluded, there being ſuch *diverſities* of Religions, and ſo many falſe wayes in the World, you had need to have your eyes about you; erring herein will not ſtand with the ſafety of your ſouls, your eternal happineſs or miſery depends upon it. And then be *True* to that Religion you chuſe

chuſe, play not faſt and looſe with it. Its a buſineſs of higheſt concernment to be ſerious in Religion, what ever you trifle in; be not falſe herein, what ever you be faulty in. Let the Doctrines and myſteries of faith you receive, influence your hearts and lives, ſanctify and change them; reſt not in the form of godlineſs without the power of it. Men may as well miſcarry in the true Religion as in a falſe, if they be falſe unto it.

Queſt. But here a great Queſtion muſt be reſolved in order to the practice of this duty, which is this. *Some may ſay, Seeing there are ſuch diverſities of Religions in the World, How ſhall we be able to make a right choice, amongſt ſo many, of the true Religion, eſpecially ſuch of us as be weak and ignorant, when great and learned men differ ſo much about it amongſt themſelves.*

Anſwer. This is a queſtion of very great importance, and indeed deſerves a ſerious Anſwer, I ſhall ſpeak to it in two particulars.

1. It is a miſtake to think, becauſe of the differences of opinions amongſt men, that there is ſuch a multitude of Religions in the World; for every different opinion

pinion is not a different Religion. There are (to ſpeak properly) but four Religions in the World, although there be different Sects & parties amongſt each of theſe, *viz.* *Heatheniſm*, *Mahometaniſm*, *Judaiſm*, and *Chriſtianity*. Indeed theſe four diſagree muchamongſt themſelves. In *Heatheniſm* ſome worſhip one God, ſome another, ſome multitudes jointly, as may be ſeen in Scripture and in all Hiſtories. In *Mahometaniſm*, all follow that Impoſtor *Mahomet*, but yet there are great differences amongſt themſelves, ſo that they are at deadly Feud often one with another for their Religion ſake, as is ſtoried of the *Turkiſh* and *Perſian Mahometans*. In *Judaiſm* all worſhip the true God, the maker of Heaven and Earth, and receive the Law from *Moſes*, ſerving God according to the *Ordinances thereof*; *yet have they different Sects* amongſt themſelves as the *Phariſees*, *Saducees*, *Eſſens*, *&c.* In Chriſtianity all worſhip God in Chriſt, although there be diverſities of Sects and Hereſies amongſt them; So that indeed there are but four Religions in the World.

2. There's a great difficulty to diſcern which of theſe four we ſhould chuſe for

our

our Religion; even the weakeſt underſtanding that indifferently weighs them, may be convinced.

(1) For *Heatheniſm*, Its evident to reaſon their Religion is not true, to worſhip ſo many Gods, and them alſo creatures, as the Sun and Moon, yea mortal men that are dead, ſuch as *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Saturn*, *&c.* Yea, the worſt of Men, Their own Poets have branded them with black notes of infamy for Adultery, Theft, Murther, *&c.* It was Gods juſt judgment (as the Apoſtle obſerves, *Rom.* 1.) *To give them up to ſuch deluſions to worſhip ſuch gods, becauſe when they knew the true God they did not glorifie him as God.* Many of their own Religion were convinced, they were not in the right, and therefore *Cicero* in his Book *De natura Deorum*, ſaith *I would I could as well finde out the true Religion, as convince others to be falſe.*

(2) For *Mahometaniſm*, though it hath ſpread far over the World, (yea, further then *Chriſtianity* is ſpread at this day) yet its moſt eaſie to prove that to be a falſe Religion; Their Prophet was a deceiver and a very flagitious perſon, and wrought no miracles; their *Alcoran* is moſt barbarous

barous and without ſenſe; their Doctrine impure as well as their Lives; their Religion promiſes a carnal Paradiſe in the World to come, full of ſenſual pleaſures, not Spiritual, and ſutable to rational immortal ſouls. It was propagated in the World by the Sword, and maintained by ignorance, and ſuppreſſing all humane learning.

(3) For *Judaiſm*, the third Religion in the World, That was indeed of God, confirmed in the Old Teſtament; But it was to continue for a time, till Chriſt came, *of whom* Moſes *and the Prophets witneſs abundantly*; then at the time of Reformation it was to be aboliſhed, *Heb.* 9. 10. Their whole worſhip and Ceremonies had reſpect to him, in whom, becauſe they would not believe, but rejected and crucified him, *the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermoſt*, They and their Temple was deſtroyed and the worſhip of it abrogated, and to this day ſo continues.

(4) It remains therefore that the Chriſtian Religion is the true Religion or elſe there's none in the World. And it indeed is witneſſed to, both in *Mahomets* Alcoran, and in the *Jewiſh* Old Teſtament, which

which ſpeaks fully of Jeſus Chriſt, his birth and parentage, with the circumſtances of time and place, his death, reſurrection, *&c. This was confirmed by many ſignes and wonders, and real miracles wrought by the firſt planters of this Religion*, Heb. 2. 4. By the means and ways of propagation of it, by weak and unlearned men, by whoſe preaching it ſoon overſpread the World, and took ſuch rooting, that the power, craft, and malice of men and Devils cannot root it out. Its evidenced by the purity and ſpirituality of its Doctrine; By the ſublimity of the Myſteries revealed in it, wherein the higheſt wiſdom of God ſhines forth; By the greatneſs and excellency of the rewards and puniſhments; By the holy Spirit appearing in the ſerious profeſſors of it (ſuch a ſpirit of holineſs as is no where elſe to be found in the World) And by the deſigne it hath to glorifie God and to humble Man, *&c.* By theſe and the like evidences the weakeſt, may eaſily be convinced, That the Chriſtian Religion is the only true Religion of all others in the World, and ſo be directed to make choice thereof.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Further Directions how to chuse the right and safe way amongst such diversities of Sects and opinions, as be amongst Christians. A discovery of the fundamental Doctrines of Faith and practical duties of Godliness, generally imbraced by all Christians in all times and places, with advice in reference unto them.

HAving inquired into the several Religions this day professed in the World, and found upon good evidence the Christian Religion to be the only true Religion, men may venture their Salvation upon. We meet next with no small difficulty whereby weak and ignorant persons are perplexed (occasioned by the diversity of *Sects* and opinions which are found amongst Christians) *viz.*

Quest. *To know, (after they once be resolved to be Christians) How to chuse the right and safe way amongst such various Sects and different perswasions of those called Christians, (unless a man might be saved in any of those Sects and waesy.) What Directions are there for the*

safe conduct of such as are at a loss herein?

Answer. Because this is a grand case wherein very many (in these sad times of Division) greatly need Direction, I shall guide them to a safe way, wherein they may securely walk, and venture their Souls without fear of miscarrying. And it is this; Let them labour to understand clearly and to imbrace heartily those *Fundamental and Catholick verities of the Christian Religion*, which are more clearly laid down in the holy Scriptures, and have been owned by the Churches of Christ, generally in all ages and places, ever since the Apostles times to our dayes, and transmitted to us in their Creeds, & Confessions of Faith, and are now owned by all (worthy the name of the Christians) withoue dispute, through all the Christian World; let them so believe them that they influence their hearts and lives throughly: And also all those *Confessed duties of godliness* that all Christians are agreed in, and walk up to the practice of them, and their Souls shall certainly be secured.

Know, that notwithstanding these diversities of *Sects*, and varieties of opini-

ons which are found amongst Christians, from which they are not priviledged, (as neither are those other three Religions, *Heathenism*, *Mahometanism*, and *Judaism*, as before was shewed) nor shall be fully whilst we be imperfect, and know but in part, and are in part carnal as well as Spiritual, whilst the envious one shall sow Tares in the field of the Church, and it shall be the pleasure of God to suffer these things to be, that they which are approved may be made manifest: Yet know, That there are some fundamental and *Catholick verities* of the Christian Religion, which are κοινόπιστα, points generally believed of all, having antiquity, universality, and consent concurring with them; which the Scriptures call the foundation, 1 *Cor.* 3. 10, 11. *The principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, Heb. 6. 1. *The form of sound Words* 2 Tim. 1. 13. Rom. 6. 17. *The proportion or Analogy of Faith*, Rom. 12. 6. Which have been conveyed down from the Apostles, even to us in this last age of the World, *nor could the gates of Hell ever prevail, so far as to extirpate them.* And these are such *Confessed Duties of godliness*, as none that have pretended to be Christi-

Christians have dared openly and directly to gainsay. Now these are the points that have greatest influence on our hearts and lives, to sanctifie and change them, and to promote the life and power of godliness, (and rarely those questions and matters of dispute that are so hotly contested about) and these avail to the saving our Souls; upon our hearty imbracing and receiving these, or our renouncing of them, either in heart or life, depends our Salvation or Damnation. We had need therefore to set our hearts on these things, that we cordially believe these Doctrines, and practice those Duties, and so doing we shall secure our eternal Salvation.

Now for further improvement of this advice we shall more particularly inquire into these great and necessary Doctrines of faith and Duties of godliness, and lay down some brief account of them in order to our belief and practice, and so consequently to our Salvation.

1. For the fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion. Not that I undertake to give an exact account hereof; for to determine this (saith a learned man) *is the master-peece of all the Divines in Christendom,*

ſtendome: but only do declare thoſe truths, which being more clearly layd down in Scripture, have been generally imbraced by all Churches worthy the name of Chriſtians (ſetting aſide controverted points) wherein ſo much truth is contained, as being joyned with holy obedience, may be ſufficient to bring a man to everlaſting Salvation. This being premiſed, they may be redûced to theſe four *Articles*.

(1) Concerning God, That there is one God of an infinite, perfect, and ſpiritual nature, Subſiſting in three moſt glorious perſons, *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt*, who is the maker, preſerver and Governor of all things, and intends his own glory in all his Works. That the greateſt concernment of reaſonable creatures is to know and acknowledge this God, to fear, love, adore and glorify him, and their chief felicity ſtands in his love and favour, in fulleſt conformity to his Image, and neareſt communion with him, and in no earthy good ſeparate from him. This is one Article of Religion neceſſary unto Salvation to be known and believed, and not controverted amongſt Chriſtians. Believe this throughly, and let it influence

your

your hearts and lives, so as you study to know this God, and to get acquaintance with him, to fear, love, and serve him, to own him for your Soveraign Lord and chief good.

(2) Concerning man, *That God made man at the first in a very holy and happy estate, from which he soon fell through Satans Temptation, and all mankinde became plunged into sin and misery. That we are all hainons offenders against the God of Heaven, under his dreadful wrath and the curse of the Law, barred out of Heaven and happiness, and lyable to eternal torments, if not speedily reconciled to God and pardoned, and by renewing grace sanctifyed and converted; which neither we, nor any meere creature is able to do for us.*

This is another Fundamental Article of Faith, so clearly laid down in Scripture as it's beyond all controversie. Entertain it not in the notion only, but let it be so digested, that you feel your sin and misery at your heart, and dare not to continue a day longer without reconciling and pardoning mercy, and renewing and sanctifying grace, lest you perish; that you despair of any creatures help, and feel your

selves eternally undone, if the God of Heaven help not.

(3) Concerning Jesus Christ our Redeemer. *That the Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, coessential and coeternal with his Father upon the appointment and designation of his Father, voluntarily undertook the office of a Saviour and Redeemer to Mankinde, and being made Man, took on him our sins, and the curse of the Law, and giving himself up a Sacrifice and an offering to God for us, purchased by his Death all things conducing to grace and glory: and having by his own power arisen from the dead and ascended into Heaven, he is become an alsufficient Saviour, and will effectually confer pardon, grace, and Salvation, on all those who shall truly believe in him; And that there is no other name under Heaven to be saved by, but by the Name of Jesus Christ.*

This is a great and necessary Doctrine of Salvation, so clearly held forth in Scripture, that it's beyond controversie, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Let this Catholick verity be received not in the Notion only, but dwell in your hearts, that you may see the infinite worth and excellency of Jesus Christ, prize him as the only Saviour, close with him on all those glorious accounts*

and

and ends he was sent upon by the Father, and yield up your selves to be saved by him in his own way, and upon his own Terms.

(4) Concerning the application of Redemption. *That our Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, having all power in Heaven and Earth given to him, hath made a new Law or Covenant of grace, and caused it to be proclaimed to the World, wherein he promises pardon and Salvation to all that shall sincerely accept and own him for their Saviour and Lord Redeemer, and truly repenting of their sins, shall rest on his death and merits alone for life, and love him above all things, and sincerely obey his Gospel-Laws and Commandments, and shall persevere in these duties to the end: And after he shall have sent his holy Spirit to work faith and conversion in his Elect, He will certainly come again from Heaven in the glory of his Father with his mighty Angels, and by his mighty power shall raise the dead, and convene all both Quick and Dead before his Judgment Seat; and then such as did truly repent them of their sins, and sincerely believed in his Name, and obeyed his Gospel, he will adjudge to Eternal glory and happiness with himself and his Father and the holy Angels: but unbelievers and impenitent persons to*

eternal torments in Hell with the Devil and his Angels. This is an unquestionable Article of the *Christian* Faith, expresly delivered in the holy Scriptures, and imbraced by the Catholick Church. *Let this truth be received, not notionally but heartily; Let it influence your hearts and lives, so as you sincerely obey the gospel, and live in the daily expectation of the coming of the Lord, and give diligence to be found of him in peace without spot, and blameless.* I shall add no other Doctrinal verities besides these fundamental Articles; They are the very substance of the Christian Creed imbraced by the Church in all ages and places.

2. For those *Practical Dutyes* in which all true *Christians* are agreed (for as there are in points of Faith fundamental Articles, so there are in point of practice fundamental Dutyes.) Now these are either

(1) Those Moral dutyes of the Law or Ten Commandements promulgated on *Mount Sinai*, and written by the finger of God in two Tables of Stone, which *Christians* are obliged to observe as well as the *Jews* (though the Ceremonial Law, which was altogether typical and shadowed good things to come, be abolished.) Yea, we

are

are bound to keep it in a more ſtrict and ſpiritual manner then the *Jews* did interpret it formerly, as appears by Chriſts Sermon, *Mat.* 5. This contains all duties of piety toward God, immediately required in the firſt Table, *viz.* To take and accept the God of Heaven that made us and gave us life and breath, and being, for our God alone; to know and acknowledg him, to fear, love, and truſt in him, and ſeek his glory; to give him that external worſhip he requires in his Word, publick, private, and ſecret, as invocation of his holy Name by prayers and praiſes, hearing and reading, meditating and conferring on his Word, receiving his Sacraments, ſanctifying his Sabbaths: Doing all this in an holy reverent manner, ſo as Gods name may be ſanctifyed by us in his ordinances, as alſo in our ordinary communications and converſations. It likewiſe contains all Duties of righteouſneſs and charity towards Man, required in the ſecond Table, *viz.* The preſerving, as well as not injuring, of the honour and authority, of the life and chaſtity of our neighbour, in thought, word and deed; as alſo his eſtate, good name *&c.* And loving

ving him even as we love our ſelves, doing good unto all, *&c.* Theſe are general Duties, all Chriſtians are agreed in, Make Conſcience to practiſe theſe.

(2) Thoſe Evangelical Duties, or Commandements of the Goſpel. For beſides theſe Moral Duties of the Law which the Goſpel doth inforce alſo by renewed and more indearing arguments, there are peculiar duties required by the Goſpel, as True repentance for every ſin and transgreſſion of Gods righteous and holy commands (for the Law gives no place to Repentance, but threatens death for every offence.) Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for pardon through his blood, and Salvation through his merits; Fervent love to God and the Redeemer, who loved us and gave himſelf for us; who hath waſhed us in his blood, and made us Kings and Prieſts to God and his Father; Sincere indeavours to promote his glory, upon the new obligation of Redemption; and living to him as his peculiar people, being not our own but his, bought with a price; Love to all the Saints and Members of Chriſt, and communion with them as we have opportunity, on account of

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that near union in Christ; which should make us bear with smaller differences that do not violate the bond of union, whilst they hold of Christ the head, and are of the same body. *&c.*

These are confessed duties all Christians areagreed in, Practise them Conscionably. The Apostle gives us the sum of all these together. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. *The grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.*

This then is the counsel I would give to such as are resolved to the Christians, but are stumbled at the variety of opinions and perswasions amongst the professors of Christianity, that they know not what to believe or what to practise; That they would believe those fundamental and Catholick truths of the Christian Religion, about which there is no dispute amongst us, and let them be so believed, that they influence their hearts and lives, and sanctify them: And also that they would conscionably practise those known and confessed duties, that all are agreed in, and then there will be no cause to question

their

their ſalvation and eternal happineſs. But it is unſeaſonable to be contending violently about diſputable points of faith, and external forms and modes of worſhip and diſcipline, and ſuch like queſtions about things not ſo clearly revealed in Scripture, nor imbraced ſo generally by all true Chriſtians and Churches, nor indeed eaſie to be comprehended by the weaker ſort of Profeſſors; whilſt thoſe weighty things beforenam'd, are neglected and diſregarded. Such will hardly evade the imputation of Hypocryſie, being ſo like the *Phariſees*, that Tithed *Mint*, *Annyſe* and *Cummin*, and neglected the weighty things of the Law:

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Other Directions in points of a Secondary nature, that are not so clearly laid down in Scripture, nor unanimously received by all Christians; but are Problematical, *and yet there is a necessity to be of the one or other perswasion. How to make a right choice in such a Case.* Four Rules about this.

BUt wha, Are not the least truths of Religion worth contending for, and the smallest circumstantials of faith or worship? Doth not God stand upon small matters in his service? Yes verily, in their due place, and after a Christian manner, we may and ought to inquire after them. When we have yielded that faith and obedience that is due to the great and more necessary points of Salvation, We are then to study the mind of God in other things of a secondary and more inferior Nature; nor is the most minute truth to be despised or neglected by us. That therefore we may make a wise choyce of the true and right way in such circumstantial and

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less necessary points, as truly pious and wise Christians differ in, which are matters *non fidei sed questionum*, (as St. *Augustine* speaks) not properly points of the *Catholick Faith*, but problematical and disputable in the Church; and yet are necessitated to be of the one or other persuasion: I come in the next place to give some directions about them; for which end, observe these few Rules which will be useful to us herein.

Aug. de peccat. orig. cap. 23.

1. Humbly seek God by daily and fervent prayers and supplications to make his minde and will known to you herein; Lean not to your own understanding and wisdome, but confess how weak you are, and full of error and darkness; Beseech him to take away the vail from before your eyes, to give you understanding, and teach you good judgment and knowledge; that what you see not, he would teach you, and wherein you are otherwise minded, he would reveal the truth unto you; Plead his promises of leading you into all truth, that you shall be all taught of God; that he will reveal his secrets to such as fear him, and guide the meek in the way, and lead

lead you by his Spirit. Hang upon the Lord daily for his guidance in ſuch difficult caſes as you are at a loſs in.

2. *Search the Scriptures*, John 5. 39. and look well to them, they are your chard and compaſs to ſteer your courſe by, try all things by them, to the Law and to the teſtimony. Take nothing on truſt from men, for the beſt of men may err. I think there is hardly any error in Doctrine, or corruption in worſhip, but hath been brought into the Church by following the opinions and practiſes of ſome reputed godly men, more then the Scriptures: when a *Peter* ſhall *Judaize* and not walk uprightly, he may not only ſeduce by his example many ordinary Chriſtians, but a *Barnabas* alſo may be carryed away from the truth by his diſſimulation, *Gal.* 2. Hold cloſe therefore to the Scriptures, thoſe infallible Oracles, the word of truth, and inquire daily into them.

(3) If yet after prayer and ſearching the Scriptures, we finde not the minde of God in ſome opinion or practice, (becauſe it is but darkly laid down in Scripture, or at leaſt through the darkneſs of minde in godly men, who cannot ſo well diſcern it)

Then

Then obſerve this further Ruſe. There are ſome general *criteria*, or marks whereby we may diſcern any Doctrine or practice whether it be of God or no; We ſhall finde them laid down in the Scriptures, and may thereby try any Doctrine or practice, when we can not ſo clearly ſee them in the particulars, *viz.* (1) Such Doctrins and practiſes as are not repugnant to, but agree and correſpond with the fundamental Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, or the firſt principles, that be according to the proportion or Analogy of faith, *Rom.* 12. 6. They be of God, receive and imbrace them; but if they be not conſonant thereunto, then reject them. (2) Such Doctrines and practiſes as tend to holineſs, *Tit.* 1. 2. Doctrines according to godlineſs, they are of God, for he is a God of holineſs, follow them: But ſuch as tend to looſeneſs and profaneſs are to be ſhun'd as not of God. This mark diſcovers the evil of ſuch opinions as teach men to caſt off Sabbaths Ordinances, Scriptures, family and Cloſet devotions, and other libertine principles; yet here beware on the contrary of a pretended holineſs above what is written, of being

righteous

righteous over much, above and beyond the rule of the word, this was the occasion of Monkish or solitary living amongst the Papists, of their pretended holy Orders, Vows, *&c.* And amongst others it hath caused Separation, Superstition and many other irregular Actings.

(3) Such Doctrines and waies as tend not to division and faction, but to peace, love, and union amongst such as fear God, those are of God, and to be followed by us, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2. *Eph.* 4. 3, 4, 5, 6. But the contrary to be shunned and avoided, *Rom.* 16. 17.

(4) Such things as tend to edification, and to further the Salvation of our souls, are to be received as of God, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. *Rom.* 14. 19. But those things that minister Questions and cause strife and contention, rather then godly edifying, are to be avoided. 1 *Tim.* 1. 4, 5.

(5) Such Opinions and Practices as tend to the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and to the setting up his righteousness and grace, and to the humbling and debasing of man, and casting him down from all high thoughts of his own excellency and abilities, they are to be received as from

God; for this is the great designe of the Gospel, 1 *Cor.* 1. *ad fin.* but the contrary is to be rejected.

These general *Criteria* or Marks may be some guide to finde out the right and safe way in some Doctrines and Practices that you are at a loss in, because you cannot read them so plainly in the word of God.

Rule 4. After you have thus done the utmost you are able, to finde out the minde of God in these controverted matters, which yet are disputable amongst the wise and godly, and you shall be necessitated to be of the one or the other perswasion or way; Then let every one do that which he is fully perswaded in his own minde to be best and most pleasing to God; not daring to go against the dictates of his own Conscience, which God hath set up as his Vicegerent in the Soul, nor subjecting himself to the judgment or Authority of any other, as Lord of his Faith; I say Believe and imbrace that opinion, and walk in that practice; But yet to this. (1) Humbly with a due sense of your own weakness

See *Ames. Cas.* l. 1. c. 5. q. 1. *Sanders. Lect.* 3. *de juram.* Sect. 10.

nesſ and ignorance, not proudly cenſuring and contemning ſuch as differ from your perſwaſion, but ever ready to hear what ſhall be offered for your conviction, eſpecially if it be from the wiſe and learned, and thoſe which by Gods providence are in place of eminency in the Church; being rather matter of Affliction to you, then of exalting your ſelf that you ſhould differ from them.

(2) Peaceably and without all Faction and Schiſm, not making parties for you, and renting from the Communion of thoſe with whom you agree in the moſt weighty and neceſſary Doctrines of Salvation, and ſo diſturbing the peace of the Church where you live: The evil of which can never be repaired by a violent contention for any truth or practice not fundamental and neceſſary unto Salvation. Here the counſel of the Apoſtle is ſeaſonable, *Rom.* 14. *If thou haſt faith, have it to thy ſelf.* and *Phil.* 3. *Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame rule, let us minde the ſame thing, and if in any thing any be otherwiſe minded, God will reveale even this unto them.* In all thoſe principal points of faith and practice, wherein is ſuch perfect harmony,

it's a manifest duty to hold Communion, only forbearing the same in those lesser matters, wherein according to present apprehension the sin and error lyeth.

(3) Chearfully and confidently, not troubling and perplexing your selves about such a perswasion and practice, with fears arising from a scrupulous Conscience, (which are like Stones in the Shooe, troubling the Feet of him that walketh;) But with a comfortable perswasion that God is well pleased with you, seeing you do the utmost you are able, to finde out the minde of God in such a particular; and therefore, if you be in the right, he will accept it; or if through weakness there be a mistake, yet he will graciously pardon it, and in his good time reveal even this unto you. For if even Earthly Parents or Masters, when their Servants or Children do their utmost to know their minds, and to do their business, so as to please them, will accept their indeavours, and take all in good part, though in every *punctilio* they have not done what was expected: much more will the gracious God accept of his Children and Servants, that desire to please him, and pardon what

what is amiſs in them. And indeed if not, no fleſh living could be ſaved; for who is there of the higheſt form of Chriſtians, that are aſcertained, that in every particular Doctrine and Practice (in thoſe things controverted amongſt the godly and wiſe) that they be in the right? Seeing the beſt of men are imperfect, and may, and do err and offend. Therefore go on chearfully with full aſſurance that the Lord accepts you. This Rule the Apoſtle fully layes down, *Rom.* 14. upon occaſion of controverſies about points not neceſſary unto Salvation, *viz.* Meats and Drinks and Dayes. He bids, Let every one be fully perſwaded in his own minde, and act accordingly; not judging and condemning others, nor breaking the peace; and then he ſhould be accepted of God, and approved of men. Thus have we a ſafe Conduct to lead us in the right way in matters circumſtantial, controverted amongſt pious and wiſe Chriſtians, in points leſs neceſſary unto Salvation; as well as in matters Fundamental, and of abſolute neceſſity thereunto.

CHAP. VII.

A closer Application of the foregoing Discourse, to the present State of the Church in England; *with particular Advice in reference to the different Wayes and Professions found amongst us.*

HAving given a more general advice sutable to all times and conditions of the Church in all places: It will be expedient next (in behalf of those for whose benefit this Discourse is principally intended) to apply the former Directions, to the present state of the Church here in *England*, and those many different Perswasions and Wayes that are amongst us.

We are a people that generally do profess the Christian Religion, which hath been of long time transmitted down to us from our Ancestors; wherein we are deeply ingaged by Education, the Laws of the Land, and manifold Obligations: But it is much to be desired that the common sort of Christians, were better instructed in the grounds and Reasons of the entertain-

tainment of this Religion (rather then of the other three before mentioned, *Heathenism*, *Mahometanism*, and *Judaism*,) and that they might gain a clear and distinct knowledg of the great and fundamental Articles thereof, and be throughly grounded in the certainty and excellency of it; A thing which is much wanting in the vulgar sort through their too great negligence and carelesness about things spiritual: but of exceeding dangerous consequence to their Souls, as exposing them to Profaneness and Error, if not to total Apostacy. And therefore this duty (though before hinted) deserves to be reinforced with the strongest perswasions.

But although we be all Christians in profession, We are sadly crumbled into such Diversities of Sects and Perswasions, occasioned much through the licentiousness of War, and relaxation of Povernment amongst us, of which occasions Satan and our corrupt natures have made too great improvement; That it is most difficult for weak and ignorant persons to find out the right and safe way amongst them, and to know what part to joyn themselves unto; This temptation having lead very

many into by-Waies and pernicious errors, and others into *Atheism*. We shall therefore attempt to give some directions what course to steer herein; what Opinions and Sects to shun and avoid; and what People and Principles we should close withall. For it would greatly conduce to the peace and welfare of the Church, and to the safety of mens souls, to be duly informed, *What Christians (or Societyes of Christians) they be, with whom Communion may be held, and how far; as also who they be that are utterly to be avoyded:* it being usual with the vulgar sort of Christians, who sometimes abound in zeal, but are much wanting in knowledge, to close with the most pernicious Principles and Wayes, where any stronger temptations insinuate themselves; then with those that are far more sound and Orthodox, if they have taken up a prejudice against them, and so have the faith of Christ with respect of persons. We shall therefore take a Survey of the different Perswasions and Wayes amongst us which may be branched into these two. 1. That Way and Profession which is publickly owned by Authority, and hath the Law of the Land for its Sanction.

ction. 2. Those Perswasions, or Wayes that are taken up by private persons contrary to the Law of the Nation.

For these latter (beginning there first) They are, as exceeding many, so of a very different nature; some retaining the Fundamental Principles and Duties of Christianity, necessary unto Salvation, and differing only in lesser matters, controverted in the Churches of Christ: others that overthrow the very Foundation it self.

Those that overthrow the Foundations of Christianity, and differ about points necessary unto Salvation, are too many.

In which rank we shall place the Papists first of all, because most considerable, and above all others most formidable. Its true indeed, There hath been in the Popish Church, all along to this day, continued such a System of saving Truths (which God hath of his great mercy preserved in the greatest *Anti-Christian Apostacy*) as being truly believed and obeyed (other Soul-destroying errours in the mean time, either not known or not cordially imbraced,) might be effectual to the Salva-

tion of many that lived and dyed within that Church: But yet Popery it ſelf, underſtanding thereby that Religion which conſiſts of ſo many new Articles of Faith (utterly unknown to the old Church of *Rome* in its purity, but now ratifyed in the Council of *Trent*, and required to be received of all men upon pain of *Anathema*) which plainly overthrow many of the great Articles of the *Catholick* Faith; as alſo of ſuch groſs Idolatries and Superſtitious Fopperies *&c.* This, I ſay, is ſuch a Religion, that none that love their Salvation ſhould cloſe with. This *Babylon* we ſhould have no communion with, leſt we communicate in her Plagues, As ſaith the voyce from Heaven, *Revel.* 18. 4. *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.* The grounds of our withdrawing from that Religion, are 1. Their many dangerous errors in matters of Faith, overthrowing directly the very Foundations of Chriſtianity. To inſtance in ſome Their Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, overthroweth the truth of Chriſts humane Nature; Their proper Sacrifice, his only Sacrifice for ſin offered once for all;

Their

Their Doctrine of merits plainly destroyeth the merits of Jesus Christ; The multitude of Mediators amongst them, deny That only Mediator betwixt God and Man, the Man Jesus Christ; 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. Their Sacrificing Priests overthrow Christs Priestly office. Their vilifying the Scriptures, and setting up their unwritten Traditions to be received with equal reverence with them, *&c.* Overthrows Christs Prophetical Office. The Kingly office of Christs, is overthrown by the Popes usurpations, dispensing with the Laws of God, and setting up other Laws of his own devising, and Lording it over the Consciences of Men. The great Article of Remission of sins, and free Justification, through the grace of God in Jesus Christ, is overthrown by their Pardons, Indulgences and Doctrines of merit, and humane Satisfactions. 2. Their Abominable Idolatries in point of Worship, as Angel-worship, Saint-worship, Relique-worship, Image-worship, *&c.* 3. Their profane Sacriledge, robbing the people of the Bread of Life, the holy Scriptures; the Cup in the Lords Supper; Nay almost, of the whole Worship of God, causing it

to be performed in a Language the Vulgar understand not. 4. Their cruelty and bloodshed wherein *Rome* Papal exceeds *Rome* Ethnicall. 5. Their Spiritual Tyranny, in exacting blind obedience in matters of Faith, as the *Philistims* pulled out the eyes of *Sampson*, and led him whither they would; In burdening Christians with innumerable Ceremonies and Superstitions, destroying the substance of Religion. 6. Their proud usurpations over Kings and Princes. 7. The Notorious Schism they are guilty of, (worse then that of the *Novatians* and *Donatists* of old) whereby they not only cast off the Reformed Churches; but the *Muscovites* and *Græcians* in *Europe*, The *Ægyptian* and *Æthiopian* Churches in *Affrick*, and all these great companies of *Christians* scatter'd all over *Asia*, even from *Constantinople* to the *East Indies*; Because they are not the Popes Subjects, they will not account them Christs; for they declare, determine and pronounce, its of absolute necessity unto Salvation, for every humane Creature to be Subject to the Pope of *Rome*. 8. Add hereunto, their unsufferable wickedness, overspreading that Church, and their allowance

lowance thereof by giving Licences to uncleanness, *Sodomy*, prostituting pardons for mony, Dispensations with Gods Laws, *&c.* In all which the *Romish* Church is incorrigible, pretending unerring Infallibility; and the Pope himself will be Supreme Judge alone in all these Cases. For these and the like grounds, (which cannot all be here enumerated) Its necessary for all good Christians to beware of Popery, and have no peace with *Rome*, till she return to her antient Primitive Purity.

Others there are also that err in Fundamental points and necessary unto Salvation, as *Anti-trinitarians*, *Anti-Scripturists*, *Arians*, *Socinians*, &c. The last of which Sects is esteemed by the learned, the very Sink into which all Heresies of former and latter times have emptyed themselves, and directly leades men to *Mahometanism*, *Judaism*, or *Atheism*. These deny the Doctrine of the Trinity (a fundamental Point, and necessary to Salvation) and the Deity of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, Reject the Satisfaction of Christ, and maintain Justifycation by works; Refuse such Articles of the

Faith

Faith, as they cannot comprehend with their Reason, *&c.* These Sects, as almost all Churches (former and latter) and Divines in their *Syncretisms*, have banished out of the Lines of Christian Communication: so it becomes all persons to avoid them as Pests, and Enemies of Christianity, and to have no fellowship with them. I shall instance only in one Sect more, of such as Err in Fundamental Points; who in respect of their want of learning and outward accomplishments, are contemptible: yet in respect of their number and their singular obstinacy in their way, whereby they amuse the Vulgar, are not to be passed by, *viz.* The Quakers, although Quakerism cannot properly be called a Sect of Christians, but rather it's a total Apostacy from Christianity; for excepting it be they have the name of Christ in their Mouths, they scarce retain any Article of the Christian Faith. The Light in all men they extoll, as the only sufficient Rule to walk by, to the apparent slighting of the Scriptures and Preaching; so that if the Question be asked, what advantage hath the *Christian* above the naked *Indian*? We cannot answer as the Apostle, *Rom.* 3. 2.

Much

Much every way; chiefly; because *unto them is committed the Oracles of God.* The Doctrine of the Trinity they openly deny; The Person of Jesus Christ, as to his humane Nature, with all his Offices assigned to him by his Father, they utterly reject, (though this is an *Arcanum* that is kept hid from their Novices.) They call not upon God in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ; They trust not in his death for Pardon and Salvation, but in a pretended sinless Perfection; They deny any necessity of Special grace of the Spirit to Conversion and Sanctification, saying the Light within them is sufficient hereunto, and scoff at them that pray for more; bidding them heed that only, and it will lead them from sin to God. Sabbath and Sacraments, and all instituted Worship they cast off; the great Doctrines of the Resurrection, Last Judgment, Heaven and Hell they turn into Allegories, *&c.* These, and other things considered, it appears that they plainly overthrow the Foun-

I charge not every particluar quaker with all these Errours (for many understand not what they hold) But mention what I finde asse ted in their printed Pamphlets.

Foundations of Christianity, and therefore Christians can have no Communion with that way.

Thus where differences are in Points destructive to the Foundations of Religion, and against the Essentials of Faith, worship and obedience: There can be no closure and agreement, but a total withdrawing, is necessary so far as civil Relations and Offices will permit.

We come next to consider these other Perswasions and Partyes among us, that (agreeing in all the necessary Points of Salvation, yet) differ in things that be less necessary; though some be of greater, and some of less moment then others. These differences be either in Points of Doctrine, or in matters of Worship and Discipline. In Points of Doctrine we have *Arminians*, *Antinomians*, *&c.* In matters of Worship and Discipline, we have *Anabaptists* (I mean such as be sound in the main Doctrins of faith, but err only in the point of Baptism.) *Independents*, *Presbyterians*, *&c.* Now about these differing wayes, Take these brief Directions sutable to those general Rules before lay'd down.

1. Ac-

1. Account them all as Christians, if they be serious in the matters of Religion, and their lives answerable; let not any evil representations of their opinions or wayes, or odious and invidious consequences drawn from their Principles, but disowned by them, so far alienate your hearts from them, as not to account them Christians and Brethren; seeing they retain the Fundamentals of Christianity and hold the head Christ, though they build on the precious Foundation, Wood, Hay, Stubble. Who is in all things free from Errour? What Church or person upon Earth?

2. Have the greatest respect, and the most intimate friendship for those in whose Principles is greatest purity, that come nigheſt the rule, and who most follow after peace and holiness, and lay out themselves more to promote the great truths of the Gospel, and the power of Godliness, then their private perswasions: But as for them who with the Wilde Fire of their Zeal, will set the Church on a flame, and are more for making Proselytes for their own way, then for seeking the welfare of the Church, and the edification and salvation of Souls, avoid them.

3. If God cast your Lot into those places or Countreys, where those Professions or VVayes are set up; and you cannot enjoy that way of serving God, that you approve as most pure; Its an unquestionable duty to hold communion there; in *France* and *Holland* with the Presbyterians; in *Germany* with the *Lutherans*; and in other Countreys with those other perswasions before named: provided the condition of thy Communion be not to give thy allowance to any thing that is evil, but in that particular thou mayst be forborn. Communion with such Churches where many corruptions and abuses are, (if the foundations of faith, and essentials of Worship be preserved) ought to be maintained, with a due care to keep ourselves only from the sins of such a Church; else the Apostle would have enjoyned separation from the Church of *Corinth*, for the Corruptions found there; and the Novatians, Donatists, and others in the antient Church were unjustly taxed, for withdrawing from her Communion for laxness of Discipline, or other corruptions which they apprehended to be therein. This duty our Church of *England* hath

taught

taught by her own practice, who hath ever owned the Reformed Churches beyond Sea for *Sister-Churches*, and given them the right hand of Fellowship; though differing from her in some matters of an inferiour nature.

CHAP. VIII.

Wherein the great controversies of Communion with, or Separation from the Church of England *is discussed. A view of what is therein praise-worthy, and what is disallowable in the judgment of those that scruple Communion. Directions suted thereunto.*

WE have spoken of those different wayes and persuasions found amongst private persons without, and against the owning and approbation of Authority, and given advice in reference to them: We are next to consider of that profession publickly set up by Authority, and that hath the civil Sanction of the Laws of this Land.

No sober person can gainsay, But this

deſerves a moſt ſerious and impartial conſideration; partly in reſpect of that Duty we owe to thoſe in Authority, to whom God hath committed the care of Religion, and the ſettling of it in their Dominions, in ſuch a way as they judge moſt agreeable to the Rule of the Word, and hath injoyned us obedience to them in the Lord; partly in reſpect of our own welfare, who may elſe ſuffer the penalty of the Laws, and had need to ſee to it, if we obey, that we do it with a good Conſcience, and if we ſuffer, that we ſuffer for the Truth, and not as evil doers; And partly in reſpect of the peace and welfare of the Church, that we do not groundleſly make a Rent therein, and thereby (as much as in us lyeth) procure the ruine thereof, for all Diviſion tends to Deſtruction.

It would therefore ſeriouſly be inquired, Whether it be a duty for Chriſtians to hold Communion with the Church of *England*, according to its preſent ſtate and adminiſtrations? or, Whether Separation from it, is warrantable and neceſſary, and how far?

For the Reſolving of which Queſtion, we ſhall take an Account of thoſe things that

that are commendable in the said Church in the judgment of those that scruple Communion with her; and also of what things they dissallow and dislike in her: And then cast up, Whether it will warrant separation, or how far, according to the same Rules of Concord we have proceeded upon, with those of the other professions before named.

And first, it will not be denyed by all Dissenters (that have understanding and sobriety in them.) But that here is to be found (1.) A clear Profession of all those Fundamental points of Faith, which are accounted amongst Christians necessary unto Salvation; yea such a pure Confession of other points of a Secondary, and more inferiour Nature, as that there's scarce any other Church in the World, that God hath blessed with a greater purity in point of Doctrine then the Church of *England*.

Homily of time and place of Prayer. Part 2.

(2.) Here also is the Christian Sabbath imbraced with much greater honour, then in many other Reformed Churches; the publick Ordinances of Preaching, Prayer, Sacraments administred; and all the Substantials of Worship

owned, *viz.* That God only is to be Worshipped and no Creatures, Saints, or Angels; That he is to be Worshipped only in and through Christ, as our only Mediator and Advocate; that he is to be Worshipped in Spirit and Truth, and to be Sanctifyed of all them that come near unto him.

(3.) As for Fundamental Duties and Points of Practice, here is a Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ alone, for Salvation; of Repentance from dead works, and love to Jesus Christ, and to all that are his; and obedience to the Moral Law of the Ten Commandments. Here is a professed Renuntiation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, with all their sinful works and Lusts. All these call for an ingenuous and candid acknowledgment. How would our fore-Fathers that lived in former times of Popery, have rejoyced to have seen such things in *England*? We should bless God that hath vouchsafed such a mercy to us: Honour our Defender of the Faith, under whose protection this Profession is made; and shew more Reverence to the Church then many do, who will pettishly slight all this, because they have not all they would have.

Second-

Secondly, we are next to consider those things that are disliked by such as scruple Communion; which are especially reducible to three Heads, (1.) Government and Discipline, which though it be various in the Reformed Churches, yet notwithstanding they hold mutual Communion with each other, as Sister-Churches; and many particular wise and godly Members of those Churches hold communion in the Ordinances of God administred in the Churches of different wayes, occasionally when they reside amongst them.

(2.) Forms of Prayers and Ceremonies, concerning which some disallow all set and imposed forms whatsoever; others only dislike the form by Law established, accounting it inconvenient, disorderly and defective, and rejecting the Ceremonies: yet wise and sober persons generally (Non-Conformists as well as Conformists) reckon external forms and modes of Divine Service, not of the Essentials of Worship; but adjuncts thereunto belonging, *E. G.* The Essence of Prayer lies in lifting up true desires to God in the name of Christ, for things agree-

Ames. Cas. l. 4 c. 14. &c. 17. *Prestons daily Exercise.*

able

able to his will, in the elevation of the heart or mind to God, *&c.* Words are but the outward clothing of these desires and holy affections, or the Chariot wherein they mount up to Heaven. And for the Ceremonies used in *England*, they are utterly denyed to be any parts of Worship, and declares only circumstantiall appendants thereunto (see the Preface to the Common Prayer, and Canons, *&c.*

(3.)Corruption in manners,and that both in People and in Ministers, which when found in the latter, makes the offence far greater, as when the Sons of *Eli* were wicked, they made the offerings of the Lord to be abhorred. These things premised, We shall now offer our advice in this great Controversie, and annex such Reasons thereto, as shall evidence it both safe and profitable; We lay it down in three particulars.

1. To beware of a Total withdrawing from the publick Assemblies in the Church of *England*,and the Worship of God therein (whilst the Fundamentals of Faith, and essentials of Worship are therein maintained) because you apprehend therein

ſome corruptions, defects, additions, or errors which are circumſtantial.

This advice though it might be urged with manifold arguments, yet the Brevity I intend in this Diſcourſe, requires me to give but a few.

(1.) If you will make the Scripture your Rule herein, you may ſee ſo clear a Beam of Light (all along through the ſame) witneſſing hereunto, That it is a wonder any ſhould be found to Queſtion this duty. Conſider the Prophets and people of God in the time of the Old Teſtament, did they ſeparate from the true Worſhip of God in the *Jewiſh* Church (or teach any to do it) when there were very great defects and corruptions therein? There was at ſome times a defect of ſome Solemn Ordinances for a long time together, as Circumciſion, the Paſſover, *&c.* Some Monuments of Idolatry remaining amongſt them, and the People (many of them) defiled therewith; Very great corruptions of manners, not only in the People, but in the Prieſts, as in *Eli*'s Sons, *&c.* yet whilſt the true worſhip of God was continued amongſt them, there's neither precept nor practice to be found of total with-

with drawing there from. Indeed the godly *Levites* and People did withdraw from the Idolatrous Worship of *Jereboams Calves*, leaving their dwellings and going to *Jerusalem*. 2 *Chron.* 11.14, 16. but no mention is made of withdrawing from the true Worship of God for such causes as were before named.

About the time of our Saviour Christ, and his Apostles, the State of that Church was greatly corrupted (by many degrees more then any sober person can judge the present Church in this Nation now to be) The Interpreters of the Law had taken away the Key of knowledge, and that little knowledge that remained, was miserably corrupted, not only with the Leaven of the *Pharisees*, but with the damnable Heresie of the *Sadducees*; The Worship of God much prophaned and the Temple polluted and made a Den of Theeves; A multitude of Superstitious Ceremonies introduced that were a burden too heavy to bear; The power of godliness subverted, whilst small things were exactly minded, the weighty things of the Law as Judgment and the love of God were neglected; A general overspreading of sin, not only

amongst

amongst the Vulgar, but the Priests themselves, and that in their Ministration and calling, as well as in their Lives, *&c.* Yet did not the Godly withdraw from the Communion of that Church for the same. We read that *Simeon*, *Anna*, and Others continued in the Temple Worshipping God daily; Holy *Zachary* forsook not his Priestly Office, but Ministred in his course in the Temple; And Christ himself was circumcised, and presented to the Lord in the Temple with the accustomed Sacrifices offer'd for him, according to the Law of *Moses*; he kept the Passover, and other Feasts of that Church, was frequently in the Temple, and in the Synagogues with his Disciples, allowed of the hearing of those that sate in *Moses*'s Chair (only gives caution against their Errours and bad lives) sent divers to the Priests to Offer their accustomed Offerings, required in the Law; Nor did he in the dayes of his flesh wholly forsake the Communion of that Church; nor his Disciples after him, until the *Jews* did contradict and blaspheme the Truth, obstinately refuse to own the Lord Jesus for the Christ, and persecute to death the Professors of the Name of Christ.

In

In the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, &c. We read of great and dangerous Errors in Faith, grievous pollutions in Worship, and sad miscarriages in Manners; yet concerning withdrawing from these Churches, we finde not a word; but many reprehensions of their Schisms and Divisions. In the Churches of *Asia*, there were several things they were blamed for, as well as some things commended in them: But no hints of Separation from those Churches for those evils found in them. So that the Scriptures give no countenance to total withdrawing from such Churches, where many corruptions are, whilst the essentials of Religion are preserved.

Some Scriptures indeed are very impertinently alledged for this practice (which may be cleared for the undeceiving of the weak in a few words) such as 2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 15, 16, 17. Which speaks of separation from Infidels and Idolaters in their Idolatries, and ungodly fellowships, not of withdrawing from Christian Assemblies, in the true Worship of God. So also 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. and 2 *Thess.* 3. 6, 14. Which Scriptures shew it a duty to withdraw from private persons living in notorious, scandalous

dalous ſins, for ſhaming the offendors, and preſerving the Churches; but ſpeak not a word of withdrawing from the true Worſhip of God in the publick Aſſemblies of the Church, becauſe of controverſal practices (yea, for ſome real evils therein) for this would tend to the deſtruction of the Church, wh ch is contrary to the end of all Church-cenſures being for Edification, not for Deſtruction. 2 *Cor.* 10. 8.

As for that Scripture *Revel.* 18. 3. *Come out of* Babylon *&c.* It may warrant a withdrawing from the Idolatrous Worſhip of *Rome*, and the Abominations of Popery; from which (we before ſhewed) it's the duty of every good Chriſtian, that loves his Salvation, to depart: but it's groſly abuſed when it's made to plead for Separation from any of the Reformed Churches, where (through the mercy of God) the Fundamentals of Faith, and eſſentials of Worſhip are maintained; ſo that we ſee the Scriptures will not warrant ſuch Separation.

(2.) Or if you will Reverence the general ſuffrage of the Chriſtian Church, and of the moſt eminent Saints and Martyrs

tyrs living therein, ever since Christs time to us (which surely however some slight, yet there's no small weight in it, else the Apostle would not plead, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. We have no such custom nor the Churches of Christ.) The most eminent Servants of Christ in all Ages have constantly held and practiced Communion with those Churches where they lived, although very often, there were far greater corruptions therein, then can be found this day amongst us, (as those that are acquainted with Antiquity know well) and have ever blamed those that have left the Churches Communion for such causes as were above named; witness the Censures past against the *Novatians*, *Donatists*, *Audeans*, &c.

As for our Separation from *Rome*, our Protestant Divines plead the Fundamental errors found therein, and gross Idolatries (which they must necessarily communicate in, if they withdraw not) persecution, *&c.* and not lesser matters. Did not those hinder? they profess a readiness to communicate with her; and that they depart from her no further, then she departs from Christ.

(3.) Will

(3.) Will you regard the judgment of the most eminent Divines (of almost all persuasions amongst Protestants) that have lived in this and the former Age, [speaking expressly concerning Communion with the Church of *England*.] Then know; 1. That all foraign Divines of other Reformed Churches have approved of Communion with her, and been ready on all occasions to give their fullest Testimony of their dislike of rigid Separation from her. 2. All former Non-Conformists (who did dissent in some smaller matters of Ceremonies, *&c.* desiring a forbearance as to their practice in those things, yet) have fully declared against Separation from the Church of *England*, witness the writings of very many of them (worthy a serious perusal at this day,) *viz. Cartwright Hildersham*, *Bradshaw*, *Bayne*, *Ball*, many Others, and witness their practice formerly, and at this day. 3. *Independents*, See *Apol. Narration of the five dissenting Brethren*, page. 5. 6. Who fully testify against the practice "of the *Brownists*, or rigid Separatists, "whose fatal miscarriages and Shipwrack, "they call Landmarks to forewarn of those "Rocks and Shelves they ran upon. And de-

" declare their ſincere profeſſion to God
" and the World, that all that conſciouſeſs
" of the defilements they conceived to
" cleave to the true Worſhip of God in the
" Congregations of *England*, or of the
" unwarranted power in Church-gover-
" nours exerciſed therein, did never work
" in them any other *thought*, much leſs o-
" pinion, but that *Multitudes* of the Pa-
" rochial Congregations were the true
" Churches of Chriſt, and the Miniſtry
" thereof a true Miniſtry, much leſs did
" it ever *enter into their hearts*, to judge
" them Anti-Chriſtian, for ſo (they ſay)
" they could not but ſee they ſhould alſo
" condemn the Churches of *Scotland*, *Hol-*
" *land*, *&c.* as no Churches, which to ima-
" gine was an *horrour* to their thoughts,
" Yea, that they always profeſſed, and in
" thoſe times when the Churches of *Eng-*
" *land* were the moſt, either actually over-
" ſpread with defilements, or in the grea-
" teſt danger thereof, and when them-
" ſelves had no hopes of ever viſiting this
" Land in peace; that they would hold a
" Communion with them as the Churches
" of Chriſt. And yet they add further.
" Beſides this profeſſion, as a real Teſtimo-

ny,

"ny, some of them, after they were actu-
"ally in the Congregational way did Bap-
"tize their Children in the Parishional
"Congregations; and occasionally admit-
"ted to the Lords Supper in their Chur-
"ches, some visiting them in their *Exile*,
"upon that relation fellowship and Com-
"membership they held in the Parish
"Churches in *England*.

It may be some will say, they have more light now, then those eminent Divines had in former times: But they bewray herein too great ignorance and arrogance; this point having been far more dissensed in former, then in these present times; in which the prejudice of most is such, they have scarce considered what hath been said against their opinions.

(4) If you withdraw totally upon this Account, you should then separate from all the Churches, that now are or ever have been in the World; for what Churches are so pure but they have some defects, errors or corruptions? For the Primitive Church, even 1260 years agone and upwards, there were as great corruptions in it, as any you can finde here, and greater also. For the Churches of your

own perſwaſion, do you think them altogether perfect? Wiſe and underſtanding men are able to finde ſome things amiſs; yea ſome of your ſelves have acknowledged all things are not according to their deſire: ſo as if you will bear with nothing but reject all parts of Communion, becauſe you cannot cloſe in ſome things, you muſt ſeparate from them too, and ſo turn Seekers, or become Hermites or Anchorites, and live alone; and at length ſeparate from your ſelves alſo, becauſe ſome things will appear blame-worthy in you alſo; whither will this lead you?

(5.) Have you no more love to, and care of the publick ſolemn Worſhip of God, then to caſt off all publick Ordinances, becauſe you diſlike ſome things in the Churches, where they are adminiſtred? It's the greateſt glory God hath in all the World to be ſolemnly Worſhipped in the publick aſſemblies: But if all ſhould withdraw from them for ſuch offence, what publick Worſhip ſhould God have in this Nation? ſeeing other perſwaſions are not permitted to meet; nay, where would it be found in the whole World? ſeeing there's no Church on Earth, but hath ſome corruptions.

(6.) Let

(6.) Let it be considered how unchristian it is, to depart from the solemn Ordinances of Gods worship in those Churches where the presence of Christ is yet continued in them; have you any warrant to leave them, before Christ leave them? when God was greatly provoked by the *Jewish* Church, so as he was about to remove from his Sanctuary, and stood at the Threshold ready to leave them, we finde many godly ones mourning for the abominations of the times, but none hastening to depart from that Church before the Lord departed. Now can you deny the presence of the Lord in the Assemblies of the Church of *England*, wherein (as before was shewed) the essentials of Faith and Worship be preserved? if God should be as unmerciful as man is uncharitable, then wo to all the Churches of Christ through the World, nay, wo to your selves. But I question not but there are thousands can seal to the presence of Christ in the Congregations of *England* at this day, as well as in former times, wherein the same Corruptions (at which so much offence is taken now) were urged to plead for a separation then. Let

such as cry out so much of Popery in others, beware of that miserable Popish Error, they restrain the Church and the priviledges thereof (the presence of Christ and Salvation, *&c.*) to their own Sect and Party; and in the mean time casting off the far greater part of the Catholick Church that maintain all the Essentials of Faith and Worship.

(7.) I might enumerate the many great mischiefs that follow upon such unwarrantable Separation. It plainly tends to the dishonour of Christ, and the reproach of the Christian Religion; To the hinderance of the success of the Gospel and the Salvation of Souls; To overthrow the Worship of God, and to open a Gap to *Atheism* and prophaness, to *Heresie* and *Popery*, &c: yea, to the utter ruine of the Christian Church, *Mat.* 12. 25.

But it may seem needless to spend more words in so clear a case: nor should I have said thus much, had not I been compelled thereto by the uncatholick (nay, I confidently call it unchristian) practice of many well meaning people, through their too great prejudice other Temptations, who do totally withdraw themselves from the

the publick Congregations in *England*, and the true Worſhip of God therein.

2. Having given my advice to hold Communion with the Churches of *England* in the true Worſhip of God, notwithſtanding the corruptions ſuppoſed to be therein. I do next adviſe, on the other hand, not to communicate with her (nor with any Church in the World) in any evil, but if any thing profeſſed or practiced therein, be found really ſinful (which may be ſuppoſed of any Church upon Earth) in that thing to withdraw and have no fellowſhip in it, to keep your ſelves pure from the ſame; yea, I ſhall add further, if there be any thing that ſhall but appear ſinful to thee, (thy Conſcience, after humble and diligent ſearching of the Word, telling thee, this is ſin) then to ſuſpend thy conſent or practice, in that particular, till it appear otherwiſe to thee. I would be here ſo far from urging any to do that act, that a truly tender Conſcience upon probable grounds may ſcruple as ſinful; that I would rather perſwade ſuch to ſuſpend their acting therein, till they be better convinced of the lawfulnes of

it; * and (ſuppoſing it be a thing not in its own nature neceſſary, but among things diſputable and tolerable) I would rather become an humble Suitor to Authority (could my interceſſion any whit avail herein) for Indulgence in ſuch a caſe; then to be a violent inforcer of any, by Terrours or Puniſhments of the Law, to go againſt their Conſciences to pleaſe men.

* *Sanderſ. de Juram.* p. 84. The dictate of Conſcience, whether right or erroneous, ever bindeth not to act againſt it.

3. Yet becauſe Conſcience may be deluded, and may call that ſinful, which is lawful, and a duty; and ſo induce men to withdraw in ſuch Acts of Communion, as neither the Law of God, nor men will allow them to withdraw from: for poſſibly the Devil may get into the Conſciences of men, and delude them; And the Conſcience may tell one, he muſt ſeparate from Baptiſm, becauſe Infant-Baptiſm is Anti-Chriſtian; Another he muſt withdraw from the Lords Supper, becauſe of mixt Communion therein; A third, from the hearing of the Word, becauſe the call of Miniſters is Anti-Chriſtian; A fourth, he muſt caſt off Sabbaths, yea Scrip-

Scriptures and all Gospel Ordinances, because abolished, (All this we have had too sad experience of in our times) Let therefore every good Christian labour for a due information of his Conscience in such points as he Scruples Communion in, and not think his bare plea of Conscience will warrant his total neglect of any duty. Though his suspending his own actings (till he may satisfie Conscience about them) may be granted: yet possibly a total neglect in some things, will not be granted *Impune*, by the Law of God or man.

* Now here it may be expected I should offer my help toward the satisfying Conscience in such Scruples, as commonly do occurr (this day,) to those that withdraw in whole or in part from the Communion of the Church of *England* in its present State and Administrations. But to do this fully, would too much disproportion this part of my discourse, to the other parts aforegoing; I rather chuse to send them to those Treatises of such eminent Non-Conformists,

* An erring Conscience cannot discharge any from a duty, being not a Law-maker, but subject to the Law. *Parisiens.*

mists, as have written fully on this subject; especially to Mr. *W. Bradshaw*'s Book of the unreasonableness of separation prefaced to, and published by Dr. *Ames*; and to Mr. *Jo. Ball* his tryal of the grounds tending to separation, * only recommending a few general Rules which being observed, may be useful in order thereunto, and so conclude my Discourse.

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* *The Reader is Advertised, that there is Published in Print, an Answer to that part of Mr.* Ball's *Book, which is a Discourse of the lawfulness of a stinted Liturgy and set forms of Prayer, under the name of Mr.* Jo. Cotton. *The Answer is highly valued by some, but by comparing the Discourse and the Answer together, it may be seen, that great injury is done to Mr.* Ball *and to Mr.* Cotton *both, and also that the Reader is grosly abused by it; for it is not that Discourse Printed at* Cambridge, 1640. *which is therein answered; (but probably some imperfect Notes, before that was published) which is evident, not only because the number and order of the Arguments answered do differ from those laid down in that Discourse; But especially because*

cause the principal things given in answer by Mr. Cotton, *are so fully spoken to by Mr.* Ball *herein, (by way of reply to* Johnson, Greenwood *and others, that formerly objected the same things;) that there seems nothing more requisite to be said by way of reply thereunto. Thus much was needful to be certifyed, because some have slighted Mr.* Balls *Book, not deeming it worth reading; because sufficiently answered by Mr.* Cotton, *whereas indeed this Book may serve for a sufficient reply to his Answer.*

CHAP. IX.

Wherein are laid down some general Rules of Caution to preserve Christians from rash and unjust separation. The Conclusion of the Discourse.

ALthough the answering all objections, and satisfying every scruple that may occurr about this point of Communion with the Congregations in *England*, is a work too large to be undertaken in these Papers; and indeed needless in respect of that abundant pains taken therein by those Writers

Writers before referred to; yet because I may not leave the sober and humble Christian, altogether without help, that is desirous to finde something here, that may satisfy his Conscience about the premises; I shall lay down some general Rules of caution, which being duly considered and improved, may through the blessing of the Lord much conduce to prevent or heal rash and unjust separation, which are these that follow.

1. Do not rashly separate for such things as have been found in almost all the Churches of Christ upon Earth, both in former and latter times: the reason is, because (though we say not, the Church is so absolutely Infallible, that it cannot err in the least particular; yet we may easily defend That) the Universal Church in all places and ages cannot err so dangerously, so as good Christians ought not to keep communion with her, but are bound to make separation from her; for this would infer that she hath wholly fallen from Christ and her bond of Union with him is dissolved, and he is no longer present with her (for till then Christians are not wholly to separate from her) yea, that

Christ

Christ hath no Church in the World, *&c.* And if so what will become of the promises of Christ, that *Hell Gates shall not prevail against her*, that *he will be with her to the end of the World*; that *he will send his Spirit to lead her into all Truth*, and *it shall abide with her for ever*; which promises though directly and primarily they were made to the Apostles, who had the special presence of Christ and the guidance of his holy Spirit in the most eminent manner, yet were made to them for the behoofe of the Church Universal, and shall be verified to it.

This duly considered, would much prevent the scandal taken at Bishops, at forms of Prayer, *&c.* For who is there (if acquainted with the State of the Church) that knows not that Bishops (even in a superiority of power and jurisdiction over other Ministers) have been in the Church of Christ almost universally from the Apostles times to our dayes; & that set Forms of Prayers, have been of exceeding long continuance in the Christian Churches through the World. Therefore such as separate for these things now, must have been led by the same principle to have separa-

ſeparated from almoſt all the Churches of Chriſt upon Earth; which thing how dangerous it is, needs not much to be ſpoken to her, to manifeſt the ſame.

2. Let not inconveniences, defects, additions, or errors Circumſtantial, cauſe you to withdraw Communion wholly from the Churches of Chriſt in the ſubſtantial duties of Gods VVorſhip, where the eſſentials are preſerved; though ſome leſſer evils may be found, do not utterly refuſe Communion there. The Lord Jeſus will not reject ſuch Churches, therefore do not you. This hath paſſed for good Divinity generally amongſt Non-Conformiſts, who acknowledge Communion may be maintained, where ſome divine inſtitutions are wanting, and ſome humane additaments meerly extrinſical are jovned to Divine Worſhip. They ſay that where the ſubſtantials of Worſhip are preſerved, though the external forms and modes be more inconvenient, diſorderly and defective; yet its lawfull, yea a duty to offer

Ameſ. caſ. Lib. 4. Cap. 24.

Commiſ. papers. P. 3. 12.

Rayne on *Eph.* 2. 15.

Hilderſ. on *Pſ.* 51. *Lect.* 35.

offer ſuch Worſhip to God rather then none at all. That what ever is not in our power to reform, it ſhall be our zeal and piety to tolerate, and with patience to bear, and in ſuch Churches there may be more cauſe to rejoyce then to greive. Indeed the contrary practice would lead to ſeparation from all the Churches of Chriſt upon Earth, for which of them all is perfect?

3. As Chriſtians ſhould fly from what is really Idolatry, Will-worſhip, Antichriſtianiſm, Popery, *&c.* So let them not be affrighted with thoſe names, when impoſed on things, without good grounds, leſt they be ſcared from neceſſary duty and Worſhip; for theſe terrifying names have been abuſively applyed to deterr weak people from the true Worſhip of God. *E. G.* Idolatry, Will-worſhip, imagery, hath been charged upon ſet forms of Prayer, and they have been cenſured to be forbidden in the ſecond commandement. But what Chriſtian (not prepoſſeſſed beforehand with prejudice againſt them) can finde them therein condemned, or in any of the Commentaries of the Prophets or Apoſtles, or in any Expoſition of

antient

antient or modern Writers, till ſome few of later times? May not any ſimple plain-hearted Chriſtian (to whoſe apprehenſiſions the Scriptures are ſuted, in all neceſſary duties, *Pſal.* 19. 7.) profeſs, he is not able to ſee any ſuch thing, but on the contrary he findeth ſet forms, not only uſed and preſcribed in the Old Teſtament, but alſo in the New; he finds Jeſus Chriſt giving a form to his Diſciples, as *John* did to his; and how can he then reſent thoſe charges of Imagery, Idolatry, Superſtition, but as meer Scare-crows? The like may be ſaid of the charge of Popery, drawn up by ſome againſt the preſent forms of Prayer by Law eſtabliſhed; that they are taken out of the Maſs Book, are Popiſh Prayers, *&c.* which afrights ſome poor weak Chriſtians, they are affraid to come near them. When as it cannot be denyed, that (1.) they were compiled by ſundry godly men of the Reformed Religion, ſome of them afterwards Martyrs in Q. *Maryes* dayes, and were ever highly valued by them. (2.) The Papiſts have ever had them in deteſtation. Q. *Mary* is reported to have razed them out of the Parliament Records,

ſo

so as it could not (till some hath late Acts passed) be well known which was the authorized Book; and *Harding* their great Champion saith of it, in his dispute with Bishop *Jewell* on *Art.* 3. That it's such a service as their good Catholicks cannot joyn with us in; not only because it is in the vulgar Tongue: but because (saith he) many necessary things are wanting in it, and many things repugnant to the Faith and custome of the Catholick Church. (3.) Popery cannot return upon us, whilst the said Common Prayer-Book is kept unaltered, how can their proper Sacrifice, Communion in one kind, Prayers to Saints, *&c.* come in, whilst this is kept up and observed; and as for the taking these Prayers out of the Mass Book, the truth is this; there are several Prayers of Antient Fathers (used before Popery was in the World) which the Papists corrupting and abusing in their Mass, our first Reformers purged out what corruptions the Papists had brought in, and did retain those antient Prayers according to their Primitive Institution. All this will be readily acknowledged by them, that judging this book unnecessary and inconvenient,

ent, do desire a Reformation therein; and is there any thing in all this that shall so affright good Christians out of the Church? Concerning the charge of Antichristianism, it is so common a word in the mouths of all that list to rayle, that its no scandal to any, till the thing be fully proved; if Bishops, and Ministers, *&c.* be judged by any to be Anti-Christian, I shall send them to that most excellent piece of Dr. *Moore*, his *Mistery of Iniquity*, where they may see the Idea of *Anti-Christianism* opened, and thence be informed, whom this censure best befits.

IV. Take heed of pretending to greater purity and strictness about Church Communion and Administrations, then the Word of God commends, or the examples of Christ and the Apostles and the Primitive Church do commend; nor be so extremely rigid as not to bear with things that they have Tolerated. It is an observable rule laid down by wise and eminent Divines, that too much strictness and severity often doth injury the Church more then profit it; its the way to overturn Churches not to reform them, especially this severity is unbecoming private

them

Christians, who having no Authority, yet complain, such persons, and such things are defilements, they must separate from them, they must not touch the unclean thing: such should take heed that they be not righteous over much, and not dare to be wise above what is written, lest their too much affected purity and misguided zeal hurt more the Church of Christ, and their own Souls then the corruptions they so much complain of. *Calvin adv. Anab.* Art. 2. *Cum sub specie studii perfectionis imperfectionem nullam tolerare possumus; tunc Diabolum nos tumefacere superbia, et hypocrisi seducere moneamur.*

V. Have publick Spirits, and look not so much on such things as are most desirable in your eyes, and conduce to your interest; as on what tends to the furtherance of the Gospel, and the good of the Church in general. There have been very few in our unhappy dayes, but have been so eagerly contending for their private opinions and wayes, that the publick interest of the Christian Religion, and of the Churches peace and welfare hath been almost forgotten by them, from whence have come in such an inundation of Errours, Heresies,

Profaneness and Atheism, that the Church hath been almost ruined thereby. In vain do we contend about the greater purity and perfection of the Christian Religion, when the very being and life of it by our contentions and divisions is indangered. what will become of our contests for greater reformation in Discipline, Worship, *&c.* If the Christian Religion, it self be lost. ? They are the best and wisest Christians that have most endeavoured, that the main Fundamental Doctrins and duties of Religion may be preserved, though in the mean time they yield in small matters that concern the beauty and perfection thereof, waiting in a wise and peaceable manner till the Lord will grant them their desires therein also, in his own way and time.

VI. Take heed of running into manifest sin and evil upon fears of what is only supposed to be so. *viz.* Of casting off Ordinances, neglecting of the publick Worship of God, breach of the peace of the *Church, &c.* Upon pretence of supposed evils in Communion. The commands of God for his Worship and Ordinances, and the Churches peace, are clear and cogent; the matters excepted against, are dark and dispu-

disputable points of controversie, and the far greater part of the Churches of Christ on earth have approved of them; therefore be afraid while you would shun an evil supposed, you run not into another that is a real and far greater evil. A truly tender conscience should fear evil on either hand, and on this side rather then that.

VII. Charge not on your selves other mens sins, but look to your own wayes and duties. If you judge Superiors to sin in their impositions, or Bishops in any Command, or Ministers in their Conformity; if you finde sin in laxeness of Discipline, in loose admissions to the Ordinances, *&c.* It's not your sin who still communicate in the Ordinances of Christ, provided you do your parts and Office. It were sad living in any Church in the World if the sins of others should be charged on such as have neither calling nor power to reform them; fitter it is by far to mourn and pray for Redressing of such evils, then to run out of the Church for them.

VIII. Take heed of that great and common mistake, that nothing is to be admitted in and about the government and administrations of the Church of Christ, in the

leaſt Circumſtantials thereof, but what is particularly and clearly held forth in the Scriptures. This miſtake hath occaſioned many needleſs ſcruples in the mindes of weak Chriſtians, and much promoted groundleſs ſeparation. It is a Rule laid down by a whole Aſſembly of Divines, many of them not much affected to the preſent eſtabliſhment. [That there are ſome circumſtances concerning the Worſhip of God and Government of the Church, common to humane actions and Societies which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Chriſtian prudence according to the general Rules of the Word] And the ſame is practiced among all thoſe that are moſt averſe to the communion of the Church of *England*, who retain amongſt themſelves many things, that they can produce little true-Scripture-proof for, but only practice them prudentially as beſt conducing to the welfare of their Churches, and (as they judge) to the Order of Gods Worſhip therein, and ſome have ingeniouſly acknowledged as much. If you ſearch the Scriptures impartially concerning Church-government you will finde there

Aſſem. Conf. of Faith. c. 1.

therein little besides the maine Essentials of it, as that the Church is to be Governed; and that by its proper Officers, and directions how they should be qualified and set apart for their Office, what the several duties belonging to their Office are, and some general directions about the management thereof; All which may sute with the several forms of Government that *Stillingf. iren.* pt. 2. c. 4. & c. 8. have been competitors amongst us wherein the power of Christs officers is further extended or more restained, wherein some act in a superior, others in a coordinate way) & therefore very many learned and godly men have judged, that no one form of government was prescribed as necessary in the Church; but it's left to be suted to the condition of those Kingdoms and Nations where the Church shall be planted. The like may be said concerning Gospel Worship; The main duties and Ordinances of it are prescribed, and those things wherein the Essence of them stands, are more fully and clearly expressed; but their circumstances and manner of performance are only couched under general Rules. This might be shewed abundantly by instances in the several parts of

Worſhip as Prayer, Preaching, Sacraments, *&c.* but it is done by others fully and muſt be omitted here, becauſe of the brevity of theſe Rules.

Nor doth this derogate from the ſufficiency of the Scriptures, nor argue want of wiſdome and faithfulneſs in Chriſt (as ſome plead) if he ſhould not preſcribe every particular, as *Moſes* did, even to the Pinns of the Tabernacle; for the Scriptures are ſufficient for that end God gave them, to make wiſe to Salvation, and in order thereunto to inſtruct us in all neceſſary points of Faith and Practice: and for Church-government and Worſhip, there's enough in thoſe Eſſentials laid down in Scripture for the preſerving the welfare of the Church in the World, and ſecuring of the true and pure Worſhip of God among men (thoſe being duly obſerved) And wherein then are the Scriptures to be argued of inſufficiency, if they leave ſome particular circumſtances undetermined? And for the charge of unfaithfulneſs in Jeſus Chriſt, if he ſhould not particularize thoſe things; it's ſtrangely preſumptuous. Such ſhould rather ſhew where Chriſt hath particularly determined all

thoſe

those circumstances, then impute unfaithfulness unto him, if he do not, what they would have to be don. There is not the like Reason to determine all circumstances in the Christian Churches as was in the *Jewish* Church, the one being in its Minority, the other grown up to a state of greater liberty and perfection, *Gal.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10. A Boy that goeth to School hath his Lesson set him, and in every particular he is stinted to his work; but when he goes to the University, he only hears Lectures, hath general Rules for his study, and is left to his own disposition, for order and manner of his studies. Besides the *Jewish* Church was confined to one Nation, that had it's civil government and Laws from God as well as it's Church institutions; but the Christian Church, being to spread throughout the World under different civil Governments, different Circumstances, might best sute with the state and condition of different People.

IX. Take heed of Resisting the ordinances of God, whilst you profess to oppose the institutions of Men. My meaning is, whilst you withstand humane inventions (as you suppose them) in the Worship of God,

beware you oppose not lawful Authority (which is the Ordinance of God) in what they injoyn in and about the Worship of God according to the power given them of the Lord. That Magistrates have the care of the Churches in their Dominions, committed to them, and should see to the due administration of the Worship and Ordinances of God therein (as well as to the outward peace and prosperity of the civil State) may be manifest to all that are willing to see it, by the laudable examples of godly Kings in former times, such as *David, Solomon, Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, &c.* Whose chiefest care was about Religion, and the Worship of God in their Dominions. Indeed they are not to make any new institutions of Worship, nor alter any thing that is particularly injoyned in the Word of God; But they are to see that all things be administred according to the same. And in the particular circumstances undetermined by God, they have a power to order and settle things according to the general Rules laid down in the Word; and (however you plead, you are not to be the Servants of Men) you must be therein subject to them in the Lord.

It

It hath been a Notion taken up by some, That as in former times, the Saints have suffered in giving Testimony to the Priestly Office of Jesus Christ; so they must bear witness to his Kingly Office whatever they suffer, and not yield to any Commandments of men in and about the Worship of God: But let such take heed that they oppose not his Kingly Office when they seem to stand up for it. For if Magistrates and Rulers be his Vice-gerents (as certainly they are) and there is a care of his Worship delegated unto them, and some power for ordering affairs in his Church in matters of outward conveniency and order, where he hath not expresly determined, in withstanding them in such things, they may resist Jesus Christ himself. Indeed it may be a further Scruple in case Magistrates injoyn things inexpedient and inconvenient, and so swarve from those general Rules that they are to go by, whether they are to yield to them in such things or no? But if the judgment of Non-Conformists may be taken herein, they determine in such cases it's better to obey then to withstand, they may sin in commanding

Baxt. five Disp. p. 460. &c.

manding ſuch things, and yet ſubjects not ſin in obeying them when commanded; they are Judges in ſuch particular caſes to determine what is expedient, as the Word of God determines what is neceſſary; and herein they follow the judgment of *Calvin, Ep.* 379. which hath been ever approved by them, who ſpeaking of things of this Nature, Saith, ſome things neither right nor profitable, but ſcandalous and drawing evil Conſequences with them; yet not being repugnant to the Word (in any expreſs determination of it) muſt be borne of the godly Brethren, when they cannot help it, and the Churches of Chriſt not forſaken. And indeed if this ſhould not be admitted, but ſo often as any ſhall judge ſuch or ſuch matters inexpedient, they might withſtand; the Axe ſeems to be laid at the roots of all government, and there would be little order in the Churches of Chriſt. There is no ſociety in the World but a yielding in ſome things is neceſſary, for the peace and welfare of that Society.

X. Let not any principles or practices that you have inconſiderately taken up, ſo far ingage you, as to make you loath to return to wayes of Truth and ſoberneſs.

Some

Some have (it may be unwillingly and with reluctancy only, through the violence of some of their own party) been lead into the wayes of rigid separation, to condemn all other Churches but their own (however found in all the main Fundamental and necessary Doctrines and duties of Christianity) and to refuse any Communion with them, (though this hath been condemned by the most wise and knowing of their own profession, stiled by some the bitter Root of separation, the way God nere blest with peace and Holiness, &c.) And now to return to wayes of sobriety, and own such as they have formerly so hotly contended against, they know not how to do it. There is naturally in man a tenaciousness of those wayes and opinions they have once professed, that they are loath to recede from them, especially if they have contended for them, this is a great piece of denyal. Men would rather yeeld in their patrimony (saith *Bucer*) then in their opinion. Besides, they may undergo the heavy charge of Apostacy, and deserting the Truth, and changing their Religion, &c. and this deterrs many from wayes of Truth and Sobriety.

Dr. T. G. Mr. Cotton.

Ep. to Jo. a Lasco.

But it would be considered, it's no disgrace for the wisest, holyest, and most learnedst Men to retract in some controversal opinions or practices; *Augustine* who was esteemed the most learned of the Fathers, Writes several Books of Retractations; and *Jerome* to *Ruffinus*, saith never blush Man to change thy opinion, for neither you nor I, nor any Person living are of so great Authority, as to be ashamed to confess that they have Erred. And as for the charge of *Apostacy* and changing your Religion in such a case as this is, it's a great mistake to affirm this; for if you search the Scriptures, Apostacy is a falling away from the main Fundamental confessed Doctrines of the Gospel and duties of godlyness, into man fest heresie or wickedness, not the changing a mans judgment or practice in some points disputable amongst the godly and Orthodox, saith Mr. *Baxter* in his *Catholick Unity*. Be it known to all the Papists in the World, that our Religion is not changed at all, our Worship is the same, whether within Book or without: our Prayers are the same for matter with those in the Common Prayer Book; and if I should one day use the Common Prayer Book, and another day forbear it,

I ſhould not change the Worſhip of God; to Pray is part of his Worſhip, but whether it be in a Book or out of it, is no part at all, but a mode or circumſtance which may be altered as occaſion ſerveth. Elſewhere the ſame learned and pious perſon ſheweth what yielding in things lawful, the Scripture recommendeth to us, from the example of St. *Paul*, when he circumciſed Timothy, *Act.* 16. 3. And when he took the men and purified himſelf with them in the Temple, to ſignifie the accompliſhment of the dayes of Purification, *&c. Act.* 21. 26, 27. So alſo from what he ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome, and this I do for the Goſpels ſake.

Five *Diſp.* p. 488.

XI. I add but one Rule of Caution more againſt a very common but dangerous miſtake, which is an occaſion to many of running into Error and Hereſie, as well as into Schiſm and Separation, *viz.* Take heed of ſetting up your own apprehenſions, and conceits of the ſenſe of Scriptures about controverted points, as Infallible Oracles, that you truſt ſo confidently to, that you will indanger the Churches

ches peace and your own ſafety for the maintaining of them, where you have not all thoſe neceſſary helps and means that are requiſite to the finding out the minde of God therein. Some that have their minds fore-ſtalled with an opinion or perſwaſion, getting a Bible into their hands, preſently conceive what ever they meet withall to make for their opinion, and begin to be more confident then an hundred wiſer and more diſcerning perſons dare to be, who know their own darkneſs and ignorance, and the myſterioufneſs of the things controverted, though they have far greater evidence of Scripture, and reaſon for them. This carryes men into ſuch wilde fancies and ſtrange deluſions ſometimes, as bring them under the juſt cenſure of *Fanaticiſm*, (a name which is too unjuſtly applyed to others, more ſober and pious Chriſtians.) Though the Fundamental and neceſſary Doctrines, and duties of Chriſtianity, are ſo plainly laid down in Scripture, that the weakeſt Chriſtians may underſtand them; and therefore have much profit by holy and humble Meditation in the Word of God day and night: yet Points controverted are oftentimes hidden from ordinary underſtandings, that know not the

the Languages and proper Idioms of Scripture and cuſtoms of the Church, and other advantages of learning; that its ordinarily impoſſible, they ſhould finde out the minde of God therein. It's a vain deluſion to think, that the Spirit (that ſome pretend to, more confidently then they have cauſe) ſhould diſcover all deep myſteries and obſcure points of controverſie to thoſe that have but ordinary underſtandings, and are wholly deſtitute of outward neceſſary means and hopes for the gaining knowledge thereby: the Spirit of God teaches not by ſuch immediate *Enthuſiaſmes*, but by irradiating the minde and elevating the reaſon that is exerciſed in ſearching the Truth in all Gods appointed means; and doth alſo help the weak to underſtand ſavourily all thoſe plain and neceſſary Truths that tend to godlineſs, and to conform their hearts and lives to the love and obedience of them. It were more becoming weak Chriſtians in matters diſputable to conſult with the Writings of able and learned Expoſitors that have all thoſe advantages which themſelves want, and not to preſume too much on their own underſtandings in ſuch things, which would be accounted unſufferable preſumption in other Arts and Sciences, and cannot be leſs in Divinity, wherein the greateſt myſteries are contained.

ined. Other Rules of Caution might here be laid down which (to avoid prolixity) I forbear to enumerate, recommending the serious consideration of these things to the sober and humble Christian, as greatly conducing to keep him from the by-paths of unjust separation; and here conclude with my hearty Prayer to God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant to the Professors of Christianity in all Nations (both Rulers & People) to minde more, and to be more zealous for the great and Fundamental points of Faith and Worship, necessary to Salvation: & to contend less about things not in their own nature necessary; That high impositions might not occasion violent oppositions; nor these again produce further impositions. But we may love one another unfainedly for the great things we are united in, and bear with one another more in things wherein difference is tolerable, and all may seek the unity, peace, and welfare of the Church, and the good of one another, *&c.* Then should Religion flourish, the Gospel be advanced, the name of God be honoured, the Souls of men edified, and all may walk in the fear of God, and comfort of the Holy Ghost; unto which let every good Christian say, *Amen.*

FINIS.

1668
P41

16.8x13.6 cm
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THE Guide Mistaken, AND Temporizing rebuked:

OR,

A brief Reply to *Jonathan Clapham's* Book, intituled, *A Guide to the True Religion.*

IN WHICH

His	*Religion*	is	*Confuted.*
	Hypocrisie		*Detected.*
	Aspersions	are	*Reprehended.*
	Contradictions		*Compared.*

BY

W. P. A Friend to the True Religion.

If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Mat. 15. 14.

London, Printed in the Year, 1668.

To the READER.

AS nothing more imports the sons of men, than a judicious search after the certain knowledge of that Eternal Truth, in which alone ability is plac'd to free from those sins and entanglements the lustful eye and wanton mind have naturally subjected them unto, and into which they are so deeply intricated; so can there nothing prove more dangerous, than an implicit reception of such Principles as daily steal out of the Press; Some are so very imbecile, as that they crave a support from the Ingenuity of their Friends to vindicate their Cause; whilst others better skill'd, cunningly can insinuate their Sentiments (however defective, being truly examined) under the plausibility of language, and resemblance of reason: but though I am willing to acknowledge no Age more shatter'd and in pieces about Religious concernments, than this we live in (some splitting on the Rocks of Atheism, whilst others creep into the shallow Creeks of bare Profession) yet with great confidence I can impeach Man as the ground of his own distracted and miserable estate; for such hath been and is the curious and inquisitive mind of Man, that as he would be wise above what is written, so is he most impatient in his search; and overlooking that sufficiency given him of God, to act in his divine and humane capacity, is either busily forming out of his brainsick fancies, rather what he would have God, Man, and Religion to be, than what they really are; or else, being born under some generally received apprehensions and Articles of Faith, Worship and Discipline, are so entirely hurried away with the variety of earthly pleasures, or diverted by fears, that they can find no leisure to enquire how far they bear any proportion with sound Reason and true Religion: Both these so much experimented evils, are the undeniable occasion of that inhumane entertainment such have met withal, whom God at any time hath sent to testifie against the invented wayes, words, works and worships of this degenerated world; looking on it as an intolerable affront, that not only they should be exploded for Hereticks, but that the Faith of their Zealous Ancestors should come in question, it may be by Reformers of no better rank than poor Mechanicks; forgetting it was the Channel, through which God in all Ages hath been pleased to

convey the streams of Divine Knowledge; and 'twas indeed most congruous with God's Omnipotence, to let the lofty worldlings know, how able he was by mean and contemptible Instruments to effect the confusion of them and their Inventions.

This never was more expresly verified, than in the progress made by that despised Generation of Pilgrims, call'd Quakers, *who notwithstanding all that opposition of Powers Ecclesiastical and Civil, and their many Stratagems imbattell'd to scatter and destroy them, are yet a People; and with no other weapons, than a holy, inoffensive and suffering conversation, have valiantly warr'd through the many Armies of their Enemies, and in the Wisdom of him that call'd them forth, been able to undermine & circumvent their most Machiavilian Conspiracies; which leads me to give thee an account of my thus appearing in thy view: I can assure thee 'tis no forwardness to gain the reputation of a Disputant, since that vain glory my Principle prohibits, and should most willingly have left this for another, did not necessity lay it strictly on me.*

Amongst the many pevish Adversaries I have met with, who have ventured to oppose and slander that Innocent People, I scarce know one who has more made it his concern than my Antagonist; for besides what either this treats of under my examination, or another anciently printed, under the protection of a large Dedicatory Epistle to O. Cromwel, *the acquaintance I have had with him by paper and personal conference, as well as the punctual information I have received concerning his practice through all our Revolutions (which I may term a Touchstone for Integrity) will by no means dispence with my passing by this Guide unanimadverted: for truly,* Reader, *I cannot but in sincerity assure thee, that a Religious pity will not have me silent, since when I narrowly observe the passages of his life, and then remark the very drift of his discourse (abundantly confused, as will appear in this short Reply) I really find it is to palliate his own nakedness, and if possible, not only to confirm all Temporizers like himself, but also by his little insinuations of pretended Christian Tenderness, to beguile the chaste minds of others into a defilement of a cringing and conforming spirit: all which strongly excites me to present thee with a Confutation of his Religion, a Reprehension of his Aspersions, a Detection of his Hypocrisie, and Comparison of his Contradictions; that being once unmask'd, he may appear in all his Imperfections, and his Disguise never prove injurious unto any.*

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

A Confutation of his Religion.

Sect. 1.

ALthough I easily shall confess Religion to be mans chiefest Concernment, and that his eternal bliss does indispensibly depend upon the sound belief and constant practice of the true one; yet when I retrospect upon that time I once imploy'd in a conversation with Books, and call to mind the excellent Defence of *Origen*, and Apology of *Tertullian* on the behalf of those primitive Christians, and also the Learning, Gravity and Reason of *Du Plessy*, *Grotius*, *Amiraldus*, *&c.* who in their time were truly honourable, and Modern Writers on the same subject, I cannot but acknowledge my self surpriz'd, to find a discourse so raw and undigested as *Jonath. Clapham's*, ventring abroad with no less title than *A Guide to the true Religion*; thereby implying, either the insufficiency of what already has been writ, or self-conceitedness, that the abilities of none can better claim so great an office: whilst in very truth he has but shewn himself a Novice in the task he hath undertook; which will but draw the eyes of all those Infidels and Hereticks (against whom he doth so zealously contend) from perusing that which carries with it more of Reason for their Confutation and Convincement, to encounter him, a match of much less consequence: so that his ignorance becomes their refuge, and his proofless accusations, gross contradictions, and often tautologies, strong grounds for a confirmation in their respective perswasions: and if that which he terms *Christian Religion* had no better Champion than he seems to be, nor more Zeal to suffer whatever comes, than Reason to defend it, he may as well turn *Jew*, *Turk* or *Heathen*; as manifestly he hath *Presbyterian*, *Independent*, *Episcopal*: but lest I may be censured for condemning that in him which I allow in my self, *viz.* bare Assertions without a proof, I shall descend to the examining of those particulars, which may most deserve our consideration.

In

Sect. 2.

Epist. p. 1. In his Epistle to the Reader, which must not slip my observation, he much *bewails the present state of the Churches of Christ in these Kingdoms*, who *for many years* (he sayes) *have been distracted*: but I'le refer it to thy judgment, *Reader*, whether this *new Guide* be little better, who dares to call *distracted people*, *Christian Churches*, or Christ's Churches *distracted*: *Paul* bore another record, when he describes the Church of Christ *without spot, wrinkle or blemish*: but whilst he would seem to allow many dissenting parties the title of *Christian Churches*, it must be remembred he else would have excluded himself from being other than an Infidel, who as occasion serv'd, has been of four; yet how palpable a contradiction this will be, not only to the Scripture, but the design of his whole Discourse, may appear upon the perusal of its latter part, where he not only advises all to acquiesce in the present constitution of the Church of *England*, but seems to lay it as a charge upon the rest, pleading strongly (as he thinks) for their complyance, not considering if they equally deserve the name of *Christian*, they consequently are independant; and since he doth allow the one to be no more Christian than the others, why any should impose upon, or injoyn obedience from its Sister-Churches, I cannot find any thing in sound Reason or Scripture to warrant it: to mend, or rather marr the matter, he in so many words, calls those very Churches he own'd for Christian in one page, *a reproach to the Christian Religion, and infamous through the world* in the very next; but how infamous his expression is, I beseech thee, *Reader*, to observe, that dares expose such foolish and irreverent terms to publick view, calling what's Christian, *infamous*, or rather what's infamous, *Christian*; methinks he should better have consulted his own reputation, since having been a Minister to most of them, his share has not been small in their reproach and infamy.

Epist. p. 2.

He marches on without fear, wit or wisdom, telling us, the intendment of his Book, *is to help against those evils, and to direct those who are apt to miscarry through occasion of diversity of opinions, and wayes found amongst us.* But how improper this Magisterial Guide is to direct three Nations which of these many wayes they ought

Epist. p. 4.

to

to walk in, will appear, if we consider the wavering of his own mind, who as it consisted with his interest, has been alwayes ready to welcome every new Power with a leading complyance; and if none would more concern themselves for his present opinion, than he has for his past, his inconstancy would not deceive them in his espousing the next Constitution that may come.

And that I may not be mistaken in my conjectures of the occasion of this Treatise, reade but a little further and thou wilt find a confirmation in his own words, who does not only account those the *best Christians*, himself, *which have through all those great Revolutions which have been amongst us, have exercised their Zeal for the maintaining the fundamental Doctrines of the Gospel, and Practice and Power of Godliness, even to a degree of Compliance*; but has confidence to give it as his judgment, that such shall appear *the most approved and judicious Christians* unto all. I shall say little more in this place, than refer him to such Episcopalians as stood faithful to their Churches constitution, during his compliance with *Presbyter*, *Independent*, *&c.* and to the resentments of those parties, now he is become *Prelatical*. And thus much for his Preface. *Epist. p. 6, 7.*

Sect. 3.

His Porch I cannot find to hold the least proportion or harmony with almost any part of his confused building; for he tells us, *the business of Religion is the grand concernment that all of us are sent into the world to mind, and therefore God hath in the framing of man's nature laid so deep an impression thereof in us, that there is no Nation so barbarous and inhumane but doth place this amongst the greatest matters they judge themselves to be interessed in.* 'Tis not my disposition to cavil at terms, and therefore shall avoid the occasion he presents me, and rather take his matter as exprest. Book, p. 1.

If God Eternal in the creation of Man, and infusion of his soul, gave him that capacity (for what else can that impression signifie) whereby he might know and comprehend so much of that Divinity by which he was made, as to live in a due and holy conformity to his divine pleasure manifested therein; what means his many Exclamations against the *Quakers Light*, as natural and insufficient, since his very words denominate this of God? Nor

can

can he (I ſhould think) ſo much forget his Catechiſm, as not to remember and acknowledg the leaſt Ray of that Immenſe Fulneſs of glorious Light ſupernatural and perfect; beſides, it were to repreſent the All-wiſe moſt indiſcreet, in communicating unto Man a proportion of his Spirit to no purpoſe; if then, it will become us better to eſteem, both of what he hath impreſt, and of the end for which he did beſtow that heavenly favour; what remains, but thoſe Inconveniences which have, do, and will attend the world, riſe from the over-looking its dictates, and giddily following the blind imaginations and groundleſs conjectures of we know not who, transferr'd to us from preceding generations: Nor will it ſerve the turn of any to reply, That whatever ſufficiency this might once have had, it becomes now invalid by tranſgreſſion: For though it will be eaſily granted that Man's Rebellion againſt the Divine Capacity or Light, has plung'd him into all the dark and confuſed practices, with which the world is ſo univerſally infected, and becomes thereby ſo entirely leavened into the nature of the wicked-one (not minding the ſolid and weighty things of God, which moſt concern his eternal peace, but rather ſporting away his precious time in the variety of delights, expoſed to the enjoyment of his ſenſe) yet to affirm that its vertue is loſt, or thereby can be rendred more inſufficient to guide Man in all his performances, than when firſt beſtow'd upon him, is to ſay, that becauſe a lewd Son will not take his Fathers good advice, therefore it was not the Son's rebellion, but the inſufficiency of the Father's counſel; or, becauſe a Servant has not improv'd the Talent given him by his Lord, but conceal'd it in a napkin, therefore 'twas no Talent, or through the careleſneſs and idle practice of the Servant, his Lord's Talent loſt the poſſibility of improvement; I ſhall confeſs his negligence might more indiſpoſe his mind to an induſtrious imploying of his Stock; but that it ſhould thereby loſe its vertue, nature, and capacity of increaſe, can by no means be admitted, becauſe incongruous both to Scripture and good Reaſon— He that tells man his thoughts, and the purpoſe of his heart, this is the Lord of Hoſts. But I ſhall ſee how this and what follows will conſiſt.

Sect. 4.

Although the beginning of his second page is manifestly opposite to his own Assertions, and consequently but a further proof of my former Section; yet since I am confident he never meant it so, it may be requisite to present thee, *Reader*, with a Confutation in his own words: *But as it is a thing all do profess themselves interessed in, so there's nothing in all the world men are at greater difference about; some taking up one Religion, some another, as pleases themselves best, one serving Baal, another Dagon, some the Sun, others the Moon or Stars, &c.* If he would place the variety of Religions on the insufficiency of that instinct or impression mentioned in his first page, & so imply a necessity of something farther to act Man in that which may be pleasing unto God, then will it manifestly follow, that the capacity given of God could not discern nor rightly distinguish betwixt that Eternal, Living and Omnipotent God, from whence it came, and *Baal, Dagon, Sun, Moon* or *Stars*; which very gross absurdity I hope none will have the confidence to assert: But further, to repute the authority of this impression, pray let these words of his have but the Readers consideration (*viz.*) — *some of one Religion, some of another, as pleases themselves best.* Can a more Universal Answer be returned, or Catholick Reason rendred, to evince the verity of the *Quakers* Principle to the intelligible World? for what has been the original of those great Debates, Contentions and Religious Duels through the World, but *SELF?* which being still impatient to be taught, and nothing less ambitious to be wise, hath ever been the ground of those Distractions, and Womb that hath brought forth those monstrous and mishapen Births, so common amongst the sons of men; and, as the fallible spirit of a man, or selfish part could not produce a nature different from its own, (which ever has been subject to fluctuation and incertainty) so has their cross and various apprehensions in the zealous prosecution of them, been like the impetuous billows of a raging Sea, that have dasht each against the other to their irrecoverable *foundring* in the Ocean of eternal misery; whereas if Mankind in that stilness, and reverent patience becoming a creature, had but waited on the great Creator of all things, according to that impression and measure of his Spirit bestow'd upon him, to encline and guide him in the well-

Pag. 2.

See p. 8, 14, 15.

pleasing path of Righteousness, he doubtless had receiv'd such infallible instructions, as should have freed him from those otherwise inextricable disquisitions, and knotty intanglements his dark inventio nsand self-exalted opinions have perplext the World withal.

Sect. 5.

In the same page he goes on thus; *How greatly then doth it behove every one to make a wise choice of that God he intends to serve, and of that Religion he means to profess in the world, and to live and die in it.* In pag. 5. he thus tautologizes (a fault I find him very often guilty of, with many other gross improprieties whilst he condemns the *Quakers* for illiterate) *to chuse delibratly what God we will serve, or that Religion we will profess, and then to labour to be established therein so as by no storms of temptations we be removed.* — Will any God serve? a very large and Libertine admonition: but he suddenly reprehends himself (the following lines of the second page flatly withstanding that latitude of serving any God) for says he, *first chuse the true God; and the rather because mans eternal happiness or misery depends thereon:* — alas for him that has elected any God, or has by this giddy Guides incouragement chosen what Religion he would profess, with a fix't resolution that no storms should remove him: What contradiction is here? Can he be esteem'd a wiseCounsellor that advises to an undertaking, which by his own acknowledgment shall never have a prosperous success? Surely his Fee was very ill deserv'd; and much better were it to have no Religion, but live insensible of all, than to become a very Zealot for a false one: nor is this the only contradiction of the like nature, as the Chapter of his Contradictions will more largely manifest.

Tautol. i pag. 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15 16, 18, 22

Sect. 6.

I am now come to take a view of his Proposition, or *Basis*, on which his whole Discourse is grounded, *viz. That it's a great point of wisdom, to make a right choice of that Religion he means to take up, and profess in the world, that he intends to live and dye in, and to venture his eternal Salvation upon.*

Since *Paul* who very well knew the mind of God, has left it as the Spirit's record in the Scriptures, *That the deep things of God*

knoweth

knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God; and looking on the true Religion to be what he intends by these following expressions, [*The Mysteries of God's Kingdom*; *Heavenly things*; *Hidden Wisdom*; *Redemption from all Iniquity*; *All things to become new*; *To be dead with Christ to the World, and risen with him to seek the things that are above*; in short, *By the revelation of the eternal Spirit, to fathom the deep, and behold the mysterious things of God*, so as thereby to be translated from *Darkness*, into his most glorious Kingdom of *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit*] I can by no means subscribe my assent to this Guide's Proposition, That Man with his tallest wisdom, distinct from that Light, or pure capacity, the *Quakers* affirm God has enlightned and invested all men with, is able to wade securely into the depths of Divine Mysteries, nor allow him that *Arbitrium* of working out in his own strength, time and *mediums*, the knowledge of the true Religion; much less can I concur with his esteeming any wise, *in rightly chusing what Religion they would imbrace*, since it doth not limit him to what is true, in which the choice can only be called right: but rather seems to give him the liberty of chusing where he will, in which no election ought to be judg'd true or wise. And lest I may be here censur'd by the Author of this Discourse under my examination, let him peruse not only his Argument, but his 14th Page, where he affirms a necessity for a man to be of some Religion; which by the following matter is manifest, as well as from the words themselves, the exceeding space given in the search and espousing of a Religion; yet however necessary he has made it there, and what liberty soever he has granted, it's his advice in the 26th Page, *to do it wisely, lest you be deluded, there being such diversities of Religion, and so many false wayes in the world, you had need have your eyes about you, erring herein will not stand with the safety of your souls, eternal happiness or misery depends upon it*: which argues strongly, (or else I know not what Argument means) against the choice being right in *any Religion*, and that it only can be so in imbracing the true one, let him but peruse his 17th page, and tell me if he doth not find this amongst the many other contradictions that the *Opinion or Dream, that every man may be saved in his own Religion, if he be true to it, is more becoming Turks than Christians*. I must confess I have not met of late in any Author, with such palpable confusion,

Mat. 13. 11. 1 *Cor.* 2. 7. ch. 4. 1. *Joh.* 3. 12. *Heb.* 9. 23 1 *Cor* 2. 7 *Tit.* 2. 13. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Col.* 3. 1. *Rom.* 14. 17.

p. 17.

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and can assure thee, *Reader*, I do avoid, for brevity's sake, the recital of much more I might instance in. What Superstructure it's possible for the best Artists to erect, on a Foundation so imperfect and unsound, he need be no exact Architecturist to determine: but notwithstanding his mistake in his way to the true Religion, he may prove Guide sufficient to his many following *errors* & *defects*.

Sect. 7.

I shall a little insist upon his second Chapter, the head is this: *Pag. 6.* *Shewing wherein the wise chusing ones Religion lys, and acts concurring thereunto.* He needs must play the crack-Philosopher and imperfectly has manag'd his little distinctions in the pedantick phrase of the canting Priests and Accademists: He tells us, first, what Election is in general, and then divides the right-chusing of Religion into three Acts, the Intellect precedingly discerning, the nature of the thing that by the will is chosen: And what in the 7th page he hath defin'd, in the 8th he instances these following words to confirm his definition, *viz. Man being a Religious Creature, by the common instinct of his natural conscience, is mov'd strongly to worship a Deity, as we see in all the Nations of the Earth, much more when he is stirred up by a divine instinct.*

What-ever moves to wor-shipGod is God's Spirit.

Answ. It hath been the unhappiness of many Ages, as it is of this, to darken and confound matters of Religion (mostly) with terms, not more affected and difficult than very often impertinent, of which this Guide is not a little guilty, as must be obvious to such as will examine his most frivolous and contratradictory distinction betwixt Natural and Divine. Not that I shall not allow them to be terms proper in their place, but very improper where he puts them: Let me perswade thee, *Reader*, to observe impartially the Confusion; I have to do with one who characters himself a *Christian*, and not a profest disciple of the *Heathen Aristotle*; and I should therefore think it may become me best (as it had him) to use such a sound form of words as are warranted by, and laid down in the Scriptures of Truth: and that he with all others may know how far the *Quakers* are on all occasions ready to bring their Principles to be tried by that which the Spirit there declares, I shall expose both his and theirs to the judgment of them, and leave thee, *Reader*, to determine which holds the greatest harmony therewith; although the contradiction of his own

words

words might have been confutation evident enough.

Religion is by *James*, a Prophet of the most high God, thus defined: *Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* Also, *to believe*, as *Paul* has it, *in thy heart, and confess with thy tongue, in, and to the Lord Jesus.* Or, as he hath it in another place, to wit, *A subjection and obedience to that Spirit, Light or Grace manifested from God to all men, teaching them that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Taking these passages for the clear and compleat signification of that term *Religion* (as I shall till some more ample be produced) and not the *whimsical* conjectures of men from their wresting of the Scriptures, patcht up into a formal Creed by their eclipst understandings, as this Guide must not deny, if he will own Scripture; then will it consequently follow, that no man can be truly stiled *Religious*, from a *natural* instinct or cause: for since the one and true *Religion*, or *Primitive*, is *divine*, *Religious* or the *Relative* must necessarily participate of the same *Divine* Nature; and if by Natural Conscience, he means *Reason* abstractively, the Relative cannot amount to more than *Rational*; for as what is simply *Animal* cannot generate what's *Rational*, so is it altogegether impossible: for what is but simply *Rational* to produce what is *Spiritual*: nor can I understand how he will secure himself from gross impertinency in nominating Man a *Religious* creature from a natural instinct; or to assert any thing but what is divine, can act Man to worship a Divinity; How far he may, to save himself, extend the signification of natural, I know not; but if he means it in the sense *Paul* often us'd it, methinks the very letter of the Scripture should have barr'd his unsuitable expression; for, saith that Apostle, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he, because they are spiritually discerned.* But if he will take *Natura* φύσις, *pro generatione viventium sive animalium, id est, nativitate*: or, if he rather will accept it in the sense of him they call *Divine Seneca*, that it imports a Deity, or Divine Reason sown in all parts of the world, he would do well to let us know; for the incongruity of his Assertion with good sense lies very palpable: He further confirms his opinion of the universality of that (by him call'd *Natural*) *Instinct*, with his Parenthesis, *as we see*

Jam 1. 28.

Rom. 10. 9.

Tit. 1. 11, 12.

in

in all Nations of the Earth, much more when he is further stirred up by a Divine Instinct. I must confess to the universality of it; but how disguis'd it is through the various trims of mens Inventions, and fore-fathers idle Traditions, a person never so little spritualiz'd may see, and easily discry the notorious foppery of most professions; the cause of which vniversal darkness has been the Nations sacrificing their judgements to the implicite Faith of their deceitful Priests; who have been and are a Monopoly to the Souls and Bodies of the whole Creation. And what he ignorantly calls *the farther stirring of a divine instinct*, is not a difference from the former in respect of its nature or quality, but measure or degree. †

† *In this only can the understanding soundly judge, & the will rightly elect.*

I have the longer insisted on this particular, because most material, as well to detect his weakness and grand inability to the work he forwardly has undertaken, as from his own expressions to elucidate and maintain the *Quakers* Principles to be Orthodox: although it was against them he mainly did design his Book; but with what success the end will manifest. I shall just hint upon his three branches into which he has split the first act of his Election. (1) He advises *to take a particular view of the Principal Doctrines and Misteryes of Faith, and duty of Godliness taught in the Scriptures*; but doth not tell us by what infallible Expositor we ought to peruse them, that might unfold those Mysteries he speaks of (which imply a dubious, intricate and obscure sense) does he mean the Instinct before-mentioned? I fear he is scarce so Orthodox, or will he have us give our own constructions as things present themselves to our natural understanding, or must we walk by the Crutches of some Commentators; for if he will at last send all to the Scriptures, or can propose no better Expedient to reconcile these Breaches, and heal those Religious Jars, than that which through mens blindness (and for want of the infallible Spirit which guides all in the Truth that receive it, and are subjected thereunto) has been the very rise and ground of them, the world will little be beholding to this Guide.

p. 10.

His second Branch advises to *discern the verity and certainty of those Doctrines that he may venture his soul upon them*, as if 'twere possible a man could take *a particular view of the principal Doctrines and Duty of Godliness*, and not *discern* both *Certainty and Verity*.

P. 11.

His third is like his second, *that a man must know the excellency thereof*

hereof, as if he could *view those Mysteries, behold both, and yet not see their excellency.* Thus Priest-like has he spoild paper, in saying the same thing in differing expressions (as in the case of the hour-glass) that he may hold out.

Sect. 8.

Act the second, he goes on thus; *After the understanding doth thus present the true Religion before us in the certainty, glory and excellency of it, then the next act is for the will to elect, it's that I am resolved to profess whatever disgraces, reproaches, losses, persecutions I may meet with:* But besides his putting man upon Religion, instigating him to run and strive of himself (A state the Scriptures declare shall never enter, because unlawful) and points him not to such a Guide as can infallibly direct unto the true Religion, he has been so very bad an example for constancy, that he and his fellow-Temporizers have stumbled more into a sneaking Conformity, and downright Atheism, than all their Prayers, Preaching, Printing, will ever regain without a miracle on both. P. 11.

His third act is little more than a repetition of the former (a crime he is very guilty of, as my marginal in some place doth observe.)

Sect. 9.

His third Chapter chiefly consists of considerations, *to evidence it a principal point of wisdom for a man to make a right choice of that Religion he would profess:* his first is drawn from the necessity of a mans being of some Religion: indeed I cannot understand wherfore he should be so often earnest in pressing men to be of some Religion, who plainly tels them in several other places there's no Salvation out of the true one; unless he thinks the imploying their Talent to the service & adoration of a false god, be more excusable then to worship none: but to inforce this consideration, he does the *Quakers* the advantage of farther instancing a proof for them, and against himself: says he, *in the very framing of the Nature of Man there are such Pinciples of Religion ingraven on him that cannot be razed out, that have taught the very Heathens to worship a Deity*— Come judge impartial Reader, betwixt this Guide and the so much condemned *Quakers*, who has here repeated what he had before acknowledged, with this material addition, *that cannot be razed out*, I would gladly be informed, whether, if he allows the Eternal that P. 14. P. 15.

God to have created and formed man in body, soul and spirit, that it be not reasonable to conclude no other could invest Man with Religious Principles, and a propensity to worship a Deity? and can it be admitted by any sober person, the Principle God hath bestowed on man should be natural, and yet religious; imperfect, and yet the gift of God? surely there can be none so dimsighted as not to discern these very gross contradictions: for if God has impreſt on man such a Religious Principle, to teach him to adore a Deity (which must be himself, or else it would not answer the end for which it was given) what is it less than to declare that God hath distributed unto every man such a proportion of his pure Spirit, and measure of his Grace, as might enable him in thought, word and deed to perform that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God? and that the ground of those divisions in Religion, fallibility in Judgement, cruelty in Disposition, and all other Abominations that like a deluge overflow the World, is not the Insufficiency of that Divine Principle, but from neglecting and disregarding the Righteous Dictates and Instructions of it: And let him not deny it to be the same it was, who bears this Testimony *that* it *cannot be razed out*, so deeply (is it his opinion, as well as truth) has the infinitly divine Sculpter ingraven the characters of his eternal Law on the hearts of all Nations, that no time or alteration amongst men can possibly obliterate or deface it.

Pag. 16 His second Consideration is *from the many Religions which are in the World, as Heathenism, Mahometanism, Judaism and Christianity:* But in his last he sums up the many Sects and Perswasions that commonly are known therein: he has divided them into such as differ doctrinally or circumstantially; and those which err fundamentally: The first are *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, *Arminians*, *Anabaptists*, *Episcoparians*, *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *&c.* to whom he boldly allots Salvation. But how far his *&c.* may concern us, he in a few lines after particularly lets us understand, wherein he has not more exprest his Cunning than his Cowardize; for as he is willing to allow all those Perswasions to be Christian, who are most likely to have the Civil Power in their hands, (that come any of those seven, with his large *&c.* he hopes to secure himself Priest of *Wramplingam*, without being condemned for temporizing) so doth he manifest himself exceeding bold, in fighting such for

P. 18.

Infidels

Infidels and Hereticks, as either cannot or will not practise external violence on those Powers that protect such Caterpillers); and that he may the better insinuate, he ventures at this juncture of his plenty to own his *quondam* Brethren in their adversity, calling them all Children of the same Father, drest up in different habits; but that his *Wardrobe* was better furnished than the rest is evident, from his variety and change, yet more penurious, for that he never wore a Coat, he has not turn'd.

His last consideration I rather call the sequel of the former, *Because*, saith he, *if one should happen of the true Religion, he would never be true unto it, unless he took it upon such a Right Choice as before was spoken of.* P. 18.

——— What Choice of Religion he has made, or what Arguments he has used to confirm it, I shall refer unto thee, *Reader:* But fain I would entreat this *Guide* once to be serious with himself, and ask his heart if ever it had any? and whether it has not through all Revolutions discover'd it self very deceitful and unsound? Alas, why will he thus nakedly expose his Ignorance and Hypocrisie to publick censure, unless he would confess? stiling a Conformity to the Constitution of the Church of *England*, a Right Choice of Religion, methinks it had been rather his discretion to be silent, contenting himself with his *Stipendium* or Hire, and hiding his Inabilities in the Rusticity of his own Parish; for he must be a very Child that does not see his weakness and temerity, that comes abroad reeling and interfering through every Chapter of his Treatise; nor is his impudence less condemnable, who takes upon him to encourage others to Fidelity, that has himself ever relinquish'd that perswasion which has sunk under the growing power of a new opinion; and this is so notorious, that though I have reserved the relation of his carriage for another place, yet I could not let these expressions slip my Animadversions.

Sect. 10.

The business of his fourth Chapter is to invalidate the Religions profest by *Heathens*, *Turks* and *Jews*; and upon better grounds to extol the *Christian*. It's far from me to justifie the opinions or practices of those acknowledged *Infidels*, but I must also say, If the Christian Religion had no better Defendants, and its Adver- p 29,30 31,32.

 saries

saries no stronger Opponents than this Guide, with his proofless Affirmations, it would have as little reason to owe him its acknowledgments, as the others their il-will and prejudice: — And one thing let me tell him, the false *Christian* (for such is he who takes upon him that profession, and lives not the holy life of Him whose Name he bears) is more intolerable than *Heathens*, *Turks*, or *Jews*, and whilst the idle gormandizing *Priests* of *England* run away with above *fifteen hundred thousand pounds a year*, under pretence of being God's Ministers, (who never sent them, but are Preachers of their own chaffie inventions, not having known his power, nor seen his shape) the equal conversation of those *Infidels* should make both *Priests* and *People* blush; and in the day that God Almighty shall judge the works of men by Jesus Christ, it shall be found more tolerable for them to enter into rest, than the outside-washt *Christian*: but, lest I may be censur'd by thee, *Reader*, for too severe, let me beseech thee to enquire throughout the story of the world, where any kind of Religion has been, or is establisht by authority, and thou wilt doubtless find upon a diligent search, that the *Peoples judgements* have ever been and are fast chain'd in the *Priests Inquisition*, and that no sort of people have been so universally through ages the very bane of soul and body to the universe, as that abominable Tribe, for whom the Theatre of God's most dreadful Vengeance is reserv'd to act their eternal Tragedy upon.

Sect. 11.

The scope of his fifth Chapter is to direct People how to chuse the safest way amongst the variety of Sects that are to be found in *Christendom* (so call'd): But before I shall examine the force and verity of his Fundamentals, I must take this passage along with me, which is a contradiction both to Scripture and other parts of his own discourse: — *Know* (saith he) *that notwithstanding these diversities of Sects and variety of Opinions which are found amongst Christians, from which they are not priviledged, as neither are those other three Religions*, Heathenism, Judaism, Mahometanism, *nor shall be fully whilst we be imperfect, and know but in part, and are in part carnal, as well as spiritual, whilst the envious one shall sow tares in the Field of the Church, and it shall please God to suffer these things to be, that they which are approved may be made manifest.*

Pag. 34

I shall not object against the long-suffering of God toward the sons of men, who waits that they might return aud not be consumed; and till they are reform'd from their gross darkness, they will not only live (but as enemies too) amongst the true Circumcision, and those who worship God in spirit; but how an impossibility of perfection in such as do believe, can be argued from the acknowledg'd imperfection of those who never knew the blood of sprinkling, and are not come to Jesus the Saviour from all iniquity, will scarce hold any agreement with the very resemblance of Reason. I well know, that if the world consisted of a thousand men, and but one hundred of them were separated from its unrighteousness, or had imbrac'd that pure Religion which keeps unspotted, the whole World cannot be esteem'd *perfect*, since the greater number remains *Infidel*; however, that which is *Spiritual*, is as certainly *perfect*, as that which is *carnal* is *imperfect*: but to insinuate the necessity of imperfection in the *particular*, from the allowance of it in the *general*; or to deny it attainable by some, because of the confest improbability of being attain'd by all, is false and sophistical: For though all the individuals of mankind may not probably be perfect, yet since the powers, faculties and nature of mankind is as well in the *individual* as the *species* (there being a possibility of his perfection) the capacity is in all.

Gal. 4. 29.

Contrariorum eadem est ratio.

And for those two expressions of Scripture quoted by him, they both are wrested beyond their genuine sense: I can allow the best of men to know but in part, and not submit to his imperfect apprehensions; for not to mention many Scriptures, nor tediously to argue, there is a Perfection which consists in an entire separation from the pollutions of the World, as absolutely necessary and congenious to the second *Adam's* state, or qualification of a true Christian; and a Perfection relating to that more ample and eternal enjoyment of all divine knowledg and celestial ravishment, when these earthly tabernacles shall be dissolv'd: I shall in short say, that as this place was urg'd to overthrow the doctrine of Perfection, and consequently insinuate that popularly pleasing opinion of sin for term of life, so could he never have found a more express parable to vindicate it by. If Christ's interpretation ought to be of most authority, which is this; *The Field's the World, the Good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom, but the Tares are the*

Respectu termini a quo.

Respectu termini ad quem.

Children of the wicked-one, he will be greatly disappointed of his end, which also the very Parable refutes from the nature of the Tares and Wheat: for as I have already said, if he will not argue an imperfection to *Believers*, from that which is already granted to *Unbelievers*, there needs no more dispute about the matter; but if by a confest non-perfection in that greater number of *Tares*, or unrighteous men, he therefore will conclude there is no perfect *Wheat* or godly men, this were to contradict the express end and very purpose of the Parable: but since the nature of the *Wheat* admits no mixture with the *Tares* parabolically, it follows really that the Children of the Kingdom should have no relation or fellowship with, but be separated from the nature of the wicked one, and conversation of his children, which is more particularly confirm'd in those places where 'tis said, *He which sinneth is of the Devil, but he that is born of God sinneth not, because the Seed of God abideth in him:* As is the begetter, so is the begotten. It may be further observ'd, that into the Kingdom, of which they are called Children or Inhabitants, other places will not allow an entrance for any thing that is unclean or makes a lye: nor is it congruous with Scripture and common sense, the same Temple should hold *God* and *Mamon*, *Christ* and *Belial*, or that any can witness a being *dead*, and *crucified* with *Christ*, whilst living in that which has no share in him. And though he would imply a *Salvo* or Defence for the admission of all sorts to *Sacraments* (so call'd) under the notion of the Field's being the Church, yet if he well observes it is call'd the World, out of which the Church of Christ, both as to Doctrine and Conversation, was alwayes gathered; (otherwise those *Heathens*, *Turks*, *Jews*, *&c* whom he would exclude, must be members of his Church;) and whilst he would intrude Tares or the whole rabble of unrighteous persons, as members of Christs Church, he has forgot the Testimony born by the Apostles concerning that spotless, blamless, and perfect Body, of which Christ Jesus was the Head. And if he would from Christs words, of *letting them alone*, cover his practice of admitting all, as being ignorant, who is a Believer, (since none knows, *but in plucking up the Tares he may pluck up the Wheat also*) for this Guide's a Latitudinarian) what need his whole discourse for a particular constitution? he might I am sure a let that alone, as knowing it would be of little force; yet may he better

1 *Joh.* 3. 7, 8, 9.

Rev. 21. 27.

Eph. 5. 25, 26.

better understand the passage if he please of Persecution; for they were known to be Tares, (else how could the servant say, *Sir, didst not thou sow good Seed in thy Field? from whence then hath it Tares?* if he had not rightly discerned their nature, and that the Wheat was to hold no communication in any religious sort with them? nor were they to express severity or force, but (leaving them in supernatural cases to the determination and punishment of the great Judge) live a self-denying example to the world: — In this sense *Imperfection* is granted, I mean to the *carnal* and unregenerate; but to the *Redeemed* of God, and Children of the Kingdom, *Perfection.* I am now come to the examination of the essentials of his so much recommended Choice.

Matth. 13.27.

Sect. 12.

His first Article is, concerning the nature of God, and what of him is to be believed by those that would be happy; his words are these, *That there is one God, of an infinit perfect and spiritual nature, subsisting in three most glorious persons, the Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost; who is the Maker, Preserver, and Governour of all things, and intends his own Glory in all his Works; That the greatest concernment of reasonable creatures is to know and acknowledge this God, fear, love, adore and glorifie him; and their chiefest felicity stands in his love and favour, in fullest conformity to his Image, and in no earthly good separate from him.*

Pag. 36.

— Taking the former part of his Definition for granted, to wit, *the perfection, infinity, and spirituality of his Nature*, how very unsuitable herewith is the Religion and practice of this Guide, first in denying that Revelation by which only a knowledge of this glorious and invisible Deity can be obtained, which was the Testimony Christ bore concerning him, that *no man knew the Father but the Son, and him to whom the Son revealed him*; so that if such Revelation as gives to behold the Father, see his shape, and contemplate the excellency of his Nature, be wholly rejected by this Guide, methinks it is either arrogancy to intrude into things he doth not know; or folly, to tell a tale received from other people for infallible truth, without a demonstration in himself.

Matth. 11.27.

Next; If there be no other way to have communion with this invisible God, that thereby the Conformity he talks of may be known, (for being a Spirit, it's preposterous to imagine a knowledge

ledge of him obtainable by other *mediums* (than what are ædequate to his Divine Nature) but by this Revelation of Himself through his Son Christ (in us, except we are Reprobates); it will necessarily follow that he must either deny Christ's Doctrine, or else confess himself ignorant of what he writes: and since the God he would advise all to know, fear and love, is that perfect Spirit, I fain would know what Worship can be termed suitable thereunto, but the internal and spiritual one? which is altogether void of those Ceremonies, Formalities, Will-performances, and perishing Observations, once used as condescending signs to the weakness of some seasons, which at this day fills up the Sacrifices, and in which stands the Religion of those called *Christians* through the World; whose ignorance of God's once dispensing with beggarly elements, for their sakes whose understandings were vailed and too weak-sighted to behold at first the glorious Light, has put many upon the imitation of past generations, though void of their spirit, and not answering the end for which they were then practised, vainly conceiting them an offering acceptable to the eternal Spirit, when it were as well-pleasing to present a dogg's neck, as anciently was said.

Isa. 1. 13, 14. 15. *ch.* 66. 3

What shall I hence conclude, but as the Almighty God is a Spirit, so cannot he otherwise be known or served; and since he has required homage from his creatures, and yet's so purely just as to but expect what he has impow'red them to do, how absolutely necessary is it that all Worship Godward should stand in the ability given of him thereunto, and reasonable to believe that the occasion of all the Apostacy, Darkness, Inventions, and whole variety of Forms and Constitutions of Religion, has been from the neglect of that pure spiritual capacity, once given of God to act and order them in all things that did concern their duty both to God and man.

As for his strange distinction of the Deity, which he inforces on the faith of all that value their eternal welfare, I cannot find one Scripture that will bear him out; and if they had been of so much credit with this Guide as to have been by them led into their undeniable form of sound words, he would not have intruded Tradition for Scripture to the creed of any, but rather have inserted the Text or phrase it self, whose Authority might have commanded

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an assent: And it had more become him to give the world a Reason for his requiring a submission to, and credence of his Doctrine, rather than barely to draw up so many Articles, and thus impiously to call on all for a subscription as they would be saved; especially since he cannot but know how strongly these very points have been debated in ancient Councils, and not less controverted by modern persons of Reputation and Learning: Some owning one Eternal God, void of all personal relations, as *Arrius*, with many Prelates, and some Emperors, in former Centuries: *F. Socinus*, *L. Socinus*, *Crellius*, *Slichtingius*, *&c.* of later dayes. Others contend for the existence of this Divinity in the relative persons of Father and Son, as *Macedonius* of old, and many in these times, to say nothing of particulars; both which may properly be call'd *Anti-Trinitarians*, or opposers of this Guide's Trinity: But because the Scriptures do not warrant that division into, and appellation of *three persons*, & that he slightly passes over this weighty matter; recommending it for an Article of Faith, but never arming him with Reasons that receives it for his defence against the strength and great subtility of his Adversaries; I here shall offer him by way of Query what every sober person would desire satisfaction in before he entertains his principle.

Query 1. *Whether that Eternal and Almighty Being called GOD, implies more than one pure and simple Act?*

2. *Whether He can be said to subsist in three Persons?*

3. *Whether any thing can rightly be called GOD, that is not Infinite, and without beginning?*

4. *Whether if God did beget a Son, that Son had not a beginning? and if the holy Ghost proceeded from both, whether he was contemporary with the Son, and both co-eternal with God? since the Begetter precedes the Begotten, and that the Begotten cannot exist before it is?*

5. *Whether these three Persons are indistinguishable, or distinct from the Godhead, and each other, by incommunicable properties?*

6. *Whether if GOD, implies the Fulness, Perfection and Glory of all; and that no addition can be to his Greatness and Delight, but what was in his most Pure and Perfect Self from all Eternity, as that one pure Act; the successive acts of those personal relations can soberly be predicated of him, unless they all are co-eternal; which seems* in terminis *to confute a conception, progression and perfection of the distinct relations?*

If

If he will tell me it is a mysterious Point, and therefore did forbear a farther discussion of it. I answer, it did the more require his explanation; for that I conceive a Religion, or hope, will do a man but little good, for which he has not a reason in himself; and to believe things by rote, is quite as ineffectual as not to believe at all: If he shall say, That Reason is not to be consulted or rendred in this case; I answer, That either it's what deserves silence, and so condemns himself amongst those fools that will be medling; or if it's to be pried into, then to be understood before believed; or else his three Philosophical Acts of Election are defeated.

Sect. 13.

His second fundamental Principle to be received, runs thus, *That God made man at first in a very holy and happy state, from which he soon fell through Satans temptations, and all mankind became plunged into sin and misery; that we are all hainous offenders against the God of Heaven, under his dreadful wrath, and the curse of the Law, bar'd out of Heaven and happiness, and lyable to eternal torments, if not speedily reconciled to God, and pardoned, and by renewing grace sanctified and converted; which neither we nor any meer creature is able to do for us.* P. 37.

He has here drawn up an Article out of Scripture-Record, but never tells us what he has experienced in the matter, confidently bidding all embrace and believe it, without any farther examination of its verity or conviction from the Spirit of God, whose office it is *to convince the World of sin.* And I shall boldly affirm, That this forward putting people upon the entertainment of Notions, (though of Truth it self) whilst the Spirit of the Living God is not at work, or moves not on the Waters, is but the forming up that very Righteousness which is the second office of the eternal Spirit to convince of, and condemn the World for; A confutation to his own Principles and Practises, is apparent in the latter part of this second Fundamental; for if they who are *sanctified* and *convicted* are no *hainous offenders*, then will it reasonably follow, That such as are *hainous offenders* are not *sanctified* and *converted*: But this Guide, with all his Tribe, that are daily crying, *They do the things they ought not, and have no health in them, are hainous offenders*; therefore they never knew the saving health of all

John 16. 8, 9, 10.

all Nations, nor yet have felt the Blood that purges, that Spirit which sanctifies, that Word which converts to God. Again, the Holy God is perfect, and has no fellowship with one unfruitful work of darkness; but this Guide allows that man must be reconciled, or else he lies under the curse of the Law, therefore there is a possibility, nay a necessity of mans being perfect, which to deny, is to contradict his allowed reconciliation, unless he can tell where to fetch a proof, That the most pure God will have fellowship with, or be reconciled to, whatever is not of his most perfect Nature; nor is it sense to say, the Creature can be reconciled, whilst in the commission of that the curse for ever lies upon. His terms *Sanctifie* and *Convert*, imply as much, especially if he be of *Pauls* mind, that prayed the Primitive Saints might be *sanctified throughout*: and if he has an art to make *convert* imply more or less than a being changed, turned from, or made new, he would do well to let us know it; for how a man in good sense can be changed, and the same, *sanctified* and *polluted*, turned from his way, and yet in it reconciled, and under the curse at the same time, is a kind of *Antitheses* I never understood. But I haste to his third.

1 *Thes.* 5. 23.

Sect. 14.

His next great Principle he recommends, is this, *That the Lord Jesus Christ the onely begotten Son of God, Coessential and Coeternal with his Father, upon the appointment and designation of his Father, voluntarily undertook the office of a Saviour and Redeemer to mankind, and being made Man, took upon him our sins, and the curse of the Law, and giving himself up a Sacrifice and an Offering to God for us, purchased by his death all things conducing to Grace and Glory; and having by his own power risen from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, he is become an all-sufficient Saviour, and will effectually confer Pardon, Grace and Salvation on all those who shall truly believe in him, and that there is no other Name under Heaven to be saved by but the Name of Jesus Christ.* Pag. 38.

O the confused babble of the World, the by-rote canting of this Guide! how does he wander in the by-paths of vain tradition and invention! Romancing over the weight and mysteries of eternal life: And from the dark results of several factious and corrupted Councils, has pieced up a Fundamental to recommend, as indispensibly

pensibly to be embraced by all: He tells us, *Christ is the begotten Son of God:* And in his next words, says him, *Coeternal.* I am as far from questioning Christ's Eternity, as ready both to scruple and reject his praise, it carrying manifest opposition to it self. A little further, he sayes, *Upon the Fathers designation of the Son, he voluntarily undertook the Office of a Saviour, to effect what after follows on the behalf of distressed mankind.* If the Father did appoint the Son, than 'twas not voluntary, or an Act springing from his own *arbitrium*, (for that's the strict and true signification of it) but the Fathers; so that by consequence, Christ was not the cause, but the effect of Gods love to man, which contradicts the ground of that satisfaction many have conceived themselves secure by, and interessed in.

But because this Doctrine has been much controverted, and that the World of *called Christians* are bearing hard hereupon, according to their variety of apprehensions, as the onely support; I shall a little query in the matter, leaving it to this Guide to direct unto the end of what I ask; for barely to lay down a Doctrine, without the least proof, is so irrational, as I know none but would be rather forward to reject it, (though in measure true) because void of a Reason to maintain it. He sayes, *That Christ took upon him our sins, and has given himself a Sacrifice*; or in other terms, has satisfied the justice of the Father displeased with man.

Query. 1. *Whether he satisfied as God or man?*

If as God,

(Because no meer Creature can) Then,

Q. 2. *Whether this does not split the Unity of the Godhead?* which (sayes this Guide) is the same in Father and Son; *and make a duality in Natures as well as in Persons; since the one is the Appointer, the other the Appointed; the one Designer, the other Designed; the one Satisfier, the other Satisfied.*

Q. 3. *Whether since the Godhead is but one pure Act, it's not to say the Father sent the Son, the Son the Father; the Godhead, the Godhead?*

Q. 4. *Whether the conception of the appointment preceded not the conception of obedience in the appointed?*

Q. 5. *Whether Relatives are predicable of a Diety, having their Primi-*

Primitives, which supposes priority, in time as well as Nature? Or how commanding, and obeying Acts can be soberly affirmed of the Divine Being?

Q. 6. *Whether it is harmonious with reason, or according to Scripture, warrantable, to say, That Christ, as God, satisfied his Father? Since 'tis to make God resolved to have satisfaction somewhere, and none being of ability, that the same Godhead should pay it; that his Mercy should pay it his Justice, that one Attribute (so called) should deny an Acquittance, till t'ther had solv'd the Debt; God the Father standing off in high displeasure, and on his tearms, and the same Godhead in the Son designed to satisfie?* Gal. 3. 20.

Q. 7. *Whether if there be not distinct properties and attributes in the Father and Son, but are one pure Being and Godhead, concurring in the Conception, Progression, and Perfection of all Acts, it is less reasonable and necessary that the Justice of the Son should have an infinite satisfaction paid it, than the same attribute in the Father?*

If as Man,

Q. 8. *Whether if the Justice of God be infinite, his satisfaction ought not to bear a proportion therewith?*

Q. 9. *Whether Christ Jesus, as Man, could offer up an infinite Sacrifice, to satisfie the infinite displeasure of his Father? (paying all due respect to his very great afflictions, which were sustained by him in his fulfilling his Fathers Will, and really were towards the Salvation of mankind, as a pleasant offering.*

If as God and Man,

Q. 10. *Whether if two mediums be singly inconsistent with the Nature of the end for which they were propounded, the conjunction of them does not rather augment than lessen the difficulty of atchieving it?*

Q. 11. *Whether 'tis not to depaint the merciful God most revengful, that not being able to have his satisfaction where 'twas owing, would take it where it was not due?*

Q. 12. *Whether it were not more suitable to Truth, and Scripture Record, to avoid all dark conceits, Schoolmens quiddities, and vain janglings, and to believe,* That God was, and is in Christ (who is in us except we be Reprobates) reconciling the World, *or men,* unto himself, *by removing that unrighteous and self-exalted nature, which ruled as God in their hearts, and by his Glorious Light, giving them to know the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ?* 2 Cor. 13. 5. Ch. 5. 9.

 Thou

Thou must not Reader from my querying thus conclude, We do deny (as he hath falsly charged us) those Glorious Three which bear record in Heaven, the Father, Word, and Spirit, neither the Infinity, Eternity, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, for that we know he is the Mighty God; nor what the Father sent his Son to do on the behalf of lost man, declaring to the whole World, We know no other Name, by which Atonement, Salvation, and Plenteous Redemption comes; but by his Name, are according to our measures made sensible of its mighty Power: but rather to let thee see how unsatisfactorily he has imposed Religion on the World, and how exceeding open he layes his Principles to the objection of every reasonable Inquirer; for whilst he undertakes to dress up a Religion that shall excel all others, and boldly recommends it to such who are resolved to be of some Religion (as if there did accompany it such undenyable evidence, that though it might effect little upon the loose and dissolute Atheist, to fix his moving mind, yet questions not the good success it might have upon the Religiously inclined) he in reality has not brought a Proof or solid Argument, as encouragement for any to embrace them.

Sect. 15.

His last Cardinal Doctrine I am come to, after which it had been more proper, some may think, to have inserted the preceeding Caution; but since this may not give so much occasion to such as watch for opportunities to raise their misty suspicions, and that it might be too remote from those passages, for the better explanation of which it purposely was mentioned, I have the rather placed it here; and now for the examination of this his last Fundamental.

P. 39.

That our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, having all power in Heaven and in Earth given to him, hath made a new Law, and caused it to be proclaimed to the World, wherein he promises Pardon and Salvation to all that shall sincerely accept him for their Saviour.

He boldly calls him his Redeemer, not observing how unsutable his Life and Doctrine is with the Redeemed of the Lord; for whosoever is redeemed by Christ, is perfectly so, inasmuch as all his Works are perfect; but as this Guide's conversation manifests the contrary by his very great miscarriages, so does his Book; for

Paul

Paul testifies to all, *That Jesus Christ was sent to redeem*, not onely *from iniquity*, (which might admit of a distinction by froward and unclean Spirits) but *all iniquity*; therefore this person has spoke too largely in calling the pure Jesus his Redeemer, for such imperfect works would very much disgrace their Author; nor is there any thing so much stumbles Infidels, and brings a reproach upon the Christian Religion, or dishonour to the Holy God, as Priests and People, writing, talking, and fighting hard for Christ as Redeemer, whilst every eye finds them as polluted, and deeply engaged in dishonest and immoral practices, as those against whom they contend. *Tit.* 2. 14.

And truly repenting of their sins, shall rest on his death and merits alone for life, and love him above all things, and sincerely obey his Gospel, Laws, and Commandments, and shall persevere in this duty to the end.

I hope by this time Reader, thou art sufficiently convinc'd this Guide is leading thee to a state of perfection, notwithstanding he would make thee believe it's unattainable in this life; for he concludes we ought to love God above all; and is it possible for any mind, but that which walks with God, is born again, and entirely translated from the Kingdom of darkness, into the Kingdom of Gods marvellous Light, to be so entirely divorc'd from all, and espoused to God, *as to love him above all*; and *sincerely* (which implies no less than the strongest activity of an upright Soul) *obey his Gospel, Laws and Commandments, and persevere*, which excludes all commission or omission to the contrary.

In short, if Christs Law be imperfect, then must its Author be so too; but he is purely perfect, so must his Work or Law: And if the Law be perfect, then is the observer also perfect, but the Law and Gospel is prov'd undeniably perfect, therefore must the observer also. And lest this Guide should offer to retort, that none can observe it, let him answer for me, who sayes, We ought not only to *observe and obey it, but with sincerity, and perseverance in fulfilling the commands of it to the end.* Finis coronat opus, *The end's perfection.*

He follows on to this effect, *And after he shall have sent his Holy Spirit, to work Faith and Conversion in his Elect, he will certainly come again, and by his mighty Power raise the dead, and convene*

both

both quick and dead before his Judgment, and then such as obey his Gospel he will adjudge to eternal Glory, but Unbelievers to eternal Torments.

He has here jumbled many things of moment up together, scraps pickt out of more ample discourses. Succinctness is commendable, but not in his abrupt way; cramming and stifling matters for want of room to open and explain themselves to the convincement of the understanding: and whilst he loudly does exclaim against the *Quakers*, for slighting the Scriptures; who is there found more guilty than himself? that though his Book treats of nothing less than such a Religion, as he assures all must imbrace that would be saved, 'tis rare he cites one passage of them for a confirmation of his very Fundamentals; He tells us of the necessity of believing God will *send his holy Spirit*, as being otherwise void of *Faith and Conversion*, and yet denies the very office of the Spirit, which is to reveal the Mysteries of God, and to convert from faln *Adams* state to that glorious *second Adam's*, which never fell; And if he did believe in that Eternal Power which *raises from the dead* in trespasses, it would be to him according to his faith; *for God is faithful that hath promised:* but being wholly ignorant of Christ Jesus the Power, no wonder if he never knew the Resurrection, and the Life: And how absurd it is for one to draw a representation of a thing he never saw, or venture to challenge an assent to what he ignorantly has fancied to himself, without one Argument to induce, or so much as an Observation to explain the obscurity of his Doctrine, I leave the sober Reader to determine.

1 *Cor.* 1.24.
Joh. 11. 25.

Thus having endeavoured an enervation of his four Fundamentals, I shall hasten to the examining the force of his Accusations against my Friends; but in my way thither I shall a little turn my eye upon some passages of lesser moment.

Sect. 16.

His sixth Chapter mainly intends the recommending to our consideration some religious matters of a secondary nature, as a preparative to Conformity; for though he seems to express a tenderness towards doubting Consciences, yet if we follow him through his 8th and 9th Chapters, it will evidently appear, to be no other than a more facile and probable way to insinuate the same conforming spirit to the minds of others he stands branded with himself; and

and by his plea for a Conformity (as Christian) he palliates his own wicked temporizing, and would so far prevail on others, that none may be left to accuse him of Inconstancy: And if he were the man he pretends himself to be, what needs he busie himself in scribling, *who has tenderness enough* he sayes *to overlook Non-conformity*, and *that allows the Nonconforming-Churches to be Christian:* Doth he afford the Church of *England* more? time was he would not have acknowledged her so much.

Sect. 17.

His 7th Chapter is an application of his preceding discourse, bringing all Wayes amongst the *Christians* (so called) of these Nations under two, either such an establishment, *as hath the sanction of the Law to warrant and protect it, or those persuasions as are espoused by private men.* Reader, thou mayst be sure he is not of the last; the first wears the Cap of Maintenance: but he distinguishes amongst those many wayes he fathers on private spirits; some he endites of holding principles that overturn the very Foundation of Christian Religion, whilst he more candidly dismisses others with the approbation of *sound Fundamentals*, although he layes it as a home charge, *that they should not neglect the using such means as might better inform their Schismatical Judgements concerning the Church of Englands constitution.* Pag. 56 57.

Those great Impostors, or dangerous Hereticks, whom this *Guide* esteems it a foolish charity to flatter with the hopes of Salvation, are *Papists*, *Socinians* and *Quakers*, by which he has at once damn'd millions of poor immortal souls, however strict, serious, and sincere in what they knew, through many generations; whilst if defective, they owe it to the idle, lying, covetous, ignorant, and murdering spirit and practice of the Priests, whose interest it has ever been to inslave and obscure the peoples understandings, by their many cursed Inventions, and terrifying punishments; framing and trimming a Religion with such variety of external Ceremonies, as probably best might take and influence the carnal multitude, enacting most severe Laws against such as should at any time decry their Fopperies, and testifie against their abominable Inventions; Letting their Canons play, or rather plague, to the destruction of Lives, Families and Estates: — It's not my business to apologize for *Papists*, I am not of their kin; but look upon *Rome* Pagan to P. 18, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62.

have

have been much inferiour to the Impieties of *Rome* (called) *Christian*; and the latter greatly transcending the former in all sorts of abomination, capable to be invented by the wicked one. — As for the *Socinian*, I know him to have wit and learning enough to encounter a more redoutable Adversary than mine; and however he has expos'd himself to the just censures of some, his exemplary life and grave deportment I must acknowledge to be very singular; and if his cause receive no greater foil than this person's base reproaches, at least assertions without proof, the discreet world will sooner acquiesce in the stronger Arguments of *Socinus*, and his quaint Adherents, than this unreasonable and slandering Guide: Nor does a wrong opinion gain more credit or life, than when oppos'd by persons indiscreet and incompetent.

CHAP. II.

His Aspersions reprehended.

Sect. 1.

IT is an Art this Guide is curious at, to purchase the esteem of such whom his miscarriages may justly have incens'd, at the inhumane rate of forward and invective slanders, on such who has for conscience-sake stept aside from the establisht Ministry of the Nations; but more especially the *Quakers*, against whom he ever has been bold to write and speak, being withdrawn from every Form and Constitution (to wait for life from God, and not from beggarly elements) and therefore made a prey to all parties, against whom he knew every hand has been lifted up, (distressed by, and forsaken of all Civil Power) and consequently secure in his undertaking: He was not slothful under former Powers, nor has he been less diligent since; employing all his wicked wits to render us a people unfit to hold society with men, being not only destructive to Religion, but Government: Nor will the character he has given of us in pag. 62. speak much less, where enveighing against Sects, he begins with us in this manner; *I shall only instance in one*

more

more of such as err in Fundamental Points, who in respect of their want of learning and outward accomplishments are contemptible, yet in respect of their number, and singular obstinacy in their way, whereby they amuse the vulgar, are not to be past by, viz. *the* Quakers: *Although Quakerism cannot properly be called a Sect of Christians, but rather a total Apostacy from Christianity; for excepting they have the Name of Christ in their mouths, they scarce retain any Article of the Christian Faith.* Pag. 62

Reader, thou needst not be a man so very judicious, (although our Cause, being by most perused with a prejudiced eye, desires thee to be impartial) rightly to taste what the ingredients and infusions are that do compose this Spirit, who at the very entrance manifests himself thus intoxicated, that he has already over-shot both verity and good manners; thereby preparing the minds of such as reade him, to entertain his Falsities the most he can for the disadvantage of our persons and principles: This front of his Impeachment, calls for my Answer in these respects; (1.) We stand charg'd as to our *want of Learning and external accomplishments.* It is our joy and matter of rejoycing, and many times with unutterable thanksgivings in sincerity I can say, that the everlasting God should now, as frequently at other times, display the Riches of his Love and Grace to the mean and despised amongst men; herein is it transcending in our eye, that he should abscond these things, and leave them still as mysteries to the wise world, whilst in extream love he has so plentifully vouchsafed the revelation of them unto babes; and therein made good that ancient observation of *Paul,* in our times, *Not many Wise, not many Noble*; not that we thereby do exclude any, only we can affirm, that the entrance of God's everlasting Gospel of Salvation, or whatever he has had to do amongst the sons of men, has been with very seemingly despicable attendances. This ought not to be dubious unto any intelligent person that has but given himself a moderate acquaintance with History. If I should go no further than the Scriptures of Truth, let it be there examined, and 'twill appear if such whom God call'd at any time (from the beginning to the end) were not Handicraft, Labouring, and Husband-men, persons inexpert in the Scholastick Adages, Disputations and Opinions of the Heathenish Philosophical World. But lest that may not be of sufficient authority, let them but reade the account that's largely given in this matter by *Heraldus,* who declares the primitive Christians general disgust

1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27, 28

Herald. Animad. in Arnob. lo l. 3 p. 137

Tertul. lib. de Idolatria. 'to all humane Literature, and Philosophy in particular, the only 'accomplishments of that Age; which occasion'd the Gentiles 'continual upbraiding of the Christians for Ideots and illiterate 'persons. And *Origen* in so many words gives this account of the Orig lib. 30, Adv. Cel. 'very Propagators of the Gospel, that they were, 'Ἐριουργοὺς καὶ σκυτοτόμους, καὶ κναφεῖς, καὶ ἀπαιδευτοτάτους, καὶ ἀγροικοτάτους, Weavers, or Combers 'of Wool, Coblers, Fullers, and illiterate and exceeding rustick.

But lest it may be objected, that though God at first was pleas'd to use such illiterate Preachers, thereby to manifest the greatness of his Power, yet afterwards the means of Literature were not to be neglected, as necessary ingredients to an able and orthodox Minister; Let such but reade the Ordinance of the fourth Council of Con. Carthag. cap. 51, 52, 53 *Carthage*, where it is ordained, *Let every Clergie-man get his livelihood by some Artifice or Husbandry, without prejudice to his Calling*; and, *let every Clergie-man, though learned in the Word of God, have some Artifice or Handicraft*; and, *let all Clergie-men that are able to labour, learn some petty Handicrafts.*

Gauden. de mor. secul. Justinian part 2. c. 26. p. 89, 90. 'And *Gaudentius* expressly sayes, that we do not reade that ever 'the Ancients did teach Philosophy since, they did rather abhor it; 'I fain, sayes he, would see any man that could shew that the 'Christians either before, or in the time of *Justinian*, did openly 'teach Philosophy. And as the *Waldenses* of old answered the A-'cademian Papists (as *Warnerius* and others, who said concerning 'their Preachers, *Doctores ipsorum sunt Textores & Sutores*, their 'Teachers are Weavers and Coblers.) So we return to this Con-'temner of the *Quakers* for their unacquaintance in Learning; Usher. de success. c. 16. p. 28. 'We are not ashamed of our Ministers because they labour with 'their hands, procuring thereby a livelihood to themselves, accor-'ding as they are able, because both the doctrine and example of 'the Apostles doth lead us to such apprehensions.

And if this Guide were either learned himself, or but impartial, he may remember, that there was not one at the *Nicene* Council (whose Creed is so famous in *Europe*) who understood the Hebrew tongue: not to make any comparison between *John's Greek*, and the *Quakers English*; or to instance the great difference betwixt *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* in the old Testament; Libanus protem. p. 13. ed. Goth. 'And therefore be it 'known to all those who shall in *Libianus* his scoffing stile say, Let 'us not hear what these men speak concerning Heaven, God, and

Good-

'Goodness, who come forth black and sooty from the Smith's 'Forge and Anvil. That 'tis not in the power of man's reason, wit, study, or wisdom to unseal the Book, see, hear and understand the deep things of God, nor to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: But as the Apostles said, so say we, Everlasting praises to our God, by the revelation of his eternal Spirit he has given us in measure that *Divine Science*, truly so called: And this Light we are not asham'd to own for our Teacher in the sight of Nations, but by its Supream Authority to declare, There is not another Leader by whom Salvation is attainable, and in obedience to whom the Nations of them that are saved must walk.

1 Cor. 2. 10.

Isa 49 6. & 60. 19 Rev. 21. 24.

Although I needs must say, this objection of our Ignorance had much better become a person whose abilities surpass this *Cantabrigian Sizer's* education, whose inexpertness in Story, Tongues and Opinions might have barr'd him from these uncivil as well as untrue reflections; and so much of Literature is to be found amongst the *Quakers* (though it's not their strength) as does, and very likely will remain unanswer'd by Scholars of a higher Form than this conceited Guide.

Sect. 2.

2. His charge of obstinacy we deny, nor am I much solicitous to enlarge in our vindication, since 'tis the sense I know he has of all who withstand a Conformity to that Establishment his Interest leads him to imbrace, and bow not with him to the Rising-Sun: In this sense we own his *Epithite*, and adjunct of *Singular* also, being indeed most *so* in sufferings; having by all Powers (since we were a People separated by the Lord from their Inventions) been *killed all the day long* in Reputation, Liberty, Estate, and sometimes Life: but in all other respects (our Consciences excepted) we are alwayes ready to express complacency and willingness to assist our very enemies.

Sect. 3.

3. He does accuse us with a *total Apostasie from Christianity*; but if the definition *Paul* gives of a Christian ought to decide the case, then he is one in whom Christ reigns, and by the fruits of his Spirit manifests to the world he is redeemed from it, and from fulfilling those lusts which once had absolute dominion over him:

Rom. 8. 9 Gal 5. 16 John 15. 19.

But whether this Guide, or the so much calumniated *Quakers*, are fullest of self-denyal, most separated from the World, or in greatest subjection to that pure Spirit of Grace which teaches to deny all unrighteousness, and to live soberly in this present World, impartial Reader speak? For if the preceeding qualities denote men truly Christian, and that a pious, diligent, and inoffensive Conversation, is the most express Character of Christ's Followers; I make my appeal to thee and the whole World, if there lives among the Sons of men a people less deserving to be called Apostates, and consequently any that so visibly carry with them the badg of true and primitive Christianity as they. And whereas he sayes we *scarce retain any Article of the Christian Faith*; We do in so many words reject his aspersion, being made partakers of that Divine Faith in Jesus, *which sanctifies, and is held in a pure Conscience.*

Titus 2. 11, 12.

Act. 15. 9 1 *Tim.* 3. 9.

Sect. 4.

4. His next accusation is, *That they extol the Light in all men, as the only sufficient Rule to walk by, to the apparent slighting of Scriptures, and Preaching.*

Reader, If yet thou art a stranger to this Light he thus explodes and vilifies, let me beseech thee once to observe it in thy self, and tell me then if it has not that Divine quality to discern betwixt the Precious and the Vile, and manifest every Thought, Word, and Act? whether it is well-pleasing, or the contrary, to the great God? If it be criminal to own those Scriptures he falsly sayes we slight, the case is chang'd, otherwise we all confess *that God is Light*, and *that he hath enlightned every man*; by heeding, and obeying the Dictates of which, we may be preserv'd in that capacity, as the same Scripture sayes, shall bring us into the pure Fellowship, and that the *Blood of Jesus shall cleanse us from all sin.* Nor do they own a Principle in the Clouds, but above all people have demonstrated the power and authority of their Principle by that Redemption it has wrought for them, and alteration it has made from that condition which nakedly expos'd their immortal Souls to the snares and entanglements of this Worlds perishing glories, to experiment the *Blood which cleanses from all iniquity, the unspeakable peace of perfect reconciliation with God.*

Jo. 1. 9. 1 *Jo.* 1. 5, 7.

And for his confident affirming we slight both Scriptures and Preaching,

Preaching; I have this to say, That as there is not any who discover more respect for them, by a conformity of life to what they require, so do they both read, and as often quote them in Preaching, or Declaration, as any who profess them for their Rule. And Reader, that thou mayest the better be informed concerning the esteem we have them, in taking but the pains to visit our Assemblies, and that shall be a sufficient vindication of our innocency, which also may answer him as to the advantage, that's confest, the Jew had above the Heathen. *Helps the other wanted.*

5. His fifth reflection is, *Our openly denying the Doctrine of the Trinity:* but me thinks it would become him who is reproving others for not paying that respect they ought unto the Scriptures, to be a little more exemplary in using their unquestionable phrase, and sound expression, for I am altogether ignorant of any Scripture that mentions that word *Trinity*; and tis his own Opinion, that Fundamentals should not be drawn from dubious and obscure places, but rather that the Scriptures were evident and perspicuous, as to what was necessary to be believed; yet if by Trinity he understands those three Witnesses in Heaven, Father, Word, and Spirit, he should better have acquainted himself with what we disown, than ignorantly thus to blaze abroad our open denyal of what we most absolutely credit and believe.

6. His next slander runs thus, *The Person of Jesus Christ, as to his humane Nature, with all his Offices assigned to him by his Father, they utterly reject, (though this is an* Arcanum *that is kept hid from their Novices.)*

Fain would he here insinuate to people, by his most invective impostures, hard thoughts concerning an inoffensive people, whilst in reality they own no other name by which Salvation is obtainable than the Christ of God; and all the Offices that ever were assigned him by his Father, are by them acknowledged; and so remote are they from hiding their sentiments, or being jealous of exposing them to all, that whosoever will but give himself the time of frequenting their Meetings, or perusing their Books, will soon perceive how very far this Character is wide of Truth.

7. His next report is, *We call not upon God in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ.* But Reader, that thou mayest not thus be dogmatized upon, and better satisfied in thy sober inquiries, as-

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sure thy self, the *Quakers* never knew an other Name than that of Jesus Christ, through which to find acceptance with the Lord; nor is it by any other, than Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, by whom they expect Redemption, and may receive the
Heb. 9 15 promise of an eternal Inheritance.

Sect. 5.

He farther sayes, *They trust not in his death for Pardon and Salvation, but in a pretended sinless perfection.*

They are so far from disowning the death and sufferings of Christ, that there is not a people in the Earth that so assuredly witnesse and demonstrate a Fellowship therewith, confessing be-
1 *John* 5. 18. fore Men and Angels, that Christ died for the Sins of the World,
Rev. 21. 27. and gave his Life a Ransom. Perfection from sin they hold at-
Mat. 13. 33. tainable, because he that's born of God sins not, and that nothing which is unclean can enter the Kingdom of God; no Crown with-
1 *Thes.* 5. 23. out victory; the little Leaven leavens the whole lump; the strong
Mat. 5. 48. man must be cast out; *Paul* prayes they might be *sanctified Wholly: Be*
2 *Cor.* 13 11. *ye perfect as God is perfect; be perfect, be of good comfort; unto a perfect*
Ephes. 4. 13. *man; as many as be perfect; that the Man of God may be perfect: The*
Phil. 3. 15. *God of peace make you perfect in EVERY good Work; the God of all*
2 *Tim.* 3. 17. *Grace make you perfect; let us cleanse our selves from ALL filthiness of*
Heb. 13. 21. *flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God; leaving those*
1 *Pet.* 5. 10. *things behind, let us go on unto perfection; and this will we do if God*
2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *permit.* If perfection were unattainable, it would be strange that
Heb. 6. 1, 3. the Scriptures should speak of such a state, and very preposterous,
* *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24 that *Paul*, *Peter*, &c. should so sollicite and pray for the antient Saints, that they might come thither, even to the *spirits of just men made* * *perfect*; nay, he positively avouches to have arrived there, at the *Heavenly Jerusalem*, at the *Church of the first Born*, &c. And notwithstanding that this excellent State should never be enjoyed, seems to me no less than a giving the Apostles Doctrine the lie, and tacitly impeaching them of gross dissimulation and contradiction. But Reader, 'tis not onely my Opinion that Perfection is attainable; for if thou pleasest to remember the many passages of his Discourse already past my observation, as well as to remark the following Chapter of his contradictions, thou certainly will find Perfection an Article of this Guides Creed, without the least violation to his matter.

Sect. 6.

They deny any necessity of special Grace of the Spirit to Conversion and Sanctification, saying, The Light within is sufficient hereunto, and scoff at them that pray for more. —— His malice and his lies run parallel; Are there amongst the Sons of men any that so contend for that Grace which brings Salvation, and so strongly plead, as well with sufferings, as otherwise, the absolute necessity of Faith therein, subjection thereto, and sanctification thereby, to this blind professing World? And for his distinction between the Light and Grace; Reader, if thou dost well observe the Apostle *Paul's* description of their properties and effects, I question not but thou wilt soon condemn this Guide for ignorant, and very inobservant of the Scriptures: For he to the *Ephesians* writes, *That whatsoever makes manifest, is light*, and bids them thereby *to walk circumspectly*. So that the Apostle sets it as the distinguisher between good and evil, as a Guide or Leader: And thus was Jesus Christ the fulness of Light nominated by the Prophet, — *A Light unto the Gentiles, a Leader unto the People, & for Salvation unto the ends of the Earth*; who by the Evangelist, is said, *to have enlightened every man*; and by the Prophet 'tis determined, as well as by the same *John* in his *Revelation*, *That the Nations of them which are saved must walk in that Light*; and how it can be different from that Grace, whose properties are the same, *in teaching to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, cannot be rationally suppos'd; for sayes the Apostle *John*, *If ye walk in the Light, as God is in the Light, ye shall be cleansed from all sin*; which *Paul* expresses thus, *If ye walk in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*; and sayes Christ, *I am the Light of the World, he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life*: It must be therefore evident to every common understanding, that this (so much blasphem'd) Light, Spirit, and Grace, spoken of, (leading to the same condition, and bringing to the same end) are one in essence and virtue, though diversly denominated, according to the variety of its operations; and who is't can be thought a Christian that denies the sufficiency of this Glorious Light, which graciously is given of God *as a Leader to the Nations, and for Salvation to the ends of the Earth?*

Ephes. 5. 13,14,15

Isa 49.6.

John 1.9.

Rev. 21. 24.

Tit. 2. 11,12.

1 *John* 1. 5,7.

Gal, 5.16

Joh. 8.12.

Earth ? And surely had this Guide but ever been acquainted with its pure instructions, and walk't therein ; the benefit that would have certainly accru'd, had better taught him the excellency of its Nature, and the reverent observance he ought to pay it, and not to make a scoff at it, as he most wickedly sayes the *Quakers* do at Grace, (who generally are known to be no mockers, but have been made a laughing-stock by all Perswasions ; *being reviled, they bless ; persecuted, they suffer ; defamed, they intreat ; accounted the off-scouring of all things unto this day, and made a spectacle unto the World, Angele, and Men.)*

1 Cor. 4. 9, 12, 13.

Sect. 7.

10. He follows on much at the same rate, *Sabbaths, and Sacraments, and all instituted Worship they cast off, the great Doctrines of the Resurrection, Last Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, they turn into Allegories, &c.*

How long wilt thou immagine, write, and utter lying vanities to bespatter, defame, and expose to vulgar rage the innocent People, and royal Inheritance of the most high God ? Canst thou expect thy dayes shall terminate in peace, and that the Judge of all will not account with thee for all thy slanders ? yea, *Clapham,* be it known unto thee, the dreadful God shall recompence it on thy head ; nor shall thy peevish malice (surpassing all I know) escape a pledge of Gods displeasure on thee, ere thou takest thy farewel of this Earth ; he will rebuke thy unclean Spirit, too full of nasty venom and lies, ever to have admittance where nothing enters that defiles or makes a lie : It's not a rage I am in, as thou may'st think, and willingly wouldst have others to believe, God bears me record, but the infallible sence I have upon my Spirit of thy deep ensnaring hypocrisie to betray (if possible) others more moderate and faithful into the same wicked yeelding spirit with thy self ; and also (I fear) thy immortal enmity to us, the innocent People of the Lord, provokes to a holy indignation ; and judgement's for that unrighteous nature to eternity.

But that I may not leave the Reader unsatisfi'd as to this last most impudently wicked aspersion, know in the name of all true *Quakers*, the Sabbath that is reserv'd for the People of God, is so far from being by them rejected or denyed, that they admonish all to the exact and punctual observation of it, not to think their own

thoughts,

thoughts, ſpeak their own words, nor do their own works; — for the word *Sacraments*, 'tis no where ſcriptural; and till he explains his meaning, I am not bound to find him one; but for ſuch Worſhip as is of Scripture-inſtitution, and perform'd by the Spirit of God, they own and practiſe, diſowning (as there is good reaſon) all other Inſtitutions.

The Doctrine of the Reſurrection, of the juſt and unjuſt, *Laſt Judgment*, *Heaven and Hell*, as future rewards; they believe and confeſs:— And, as my faithful teſtimony both to their Life and Doctrine, I am neceſſitated to declare (and be it known to all that ever knew me) that when the unſpeakable Riches of God's eternal Love viſited me, by the call of his glorious Light, from the dark practices, wandring notions, and vain converſations of this polluted world, and that my heart was influenced thereby, and conſequently diſpoſed for the more intimate and ſincere reception of it; thoſe very habits, which once I judg'd impoſſible, whilſt here, to have relinquiſh'd, (as well as I was unwilling) and did allow my ſelf a liberty therein, becauſe not openly groſs or ſcandalous I thought my ſelf excuſable) became not only burdenſome, and by that *Light* manifeſted to be of another nature than that which I was call'd to the participation of; but in my faithful adherence to its holy counſel and inſtructions, I was immediately endued with that power and authority as gave dominion over them, and being in meaſure redeemed from that to which the Curſe is pronounc'd, I ſenſibly enjoy'd the Bleſſings that attend a Reconciliation; And never ſince I have been converſant with their Principles, (thus odiouſly deſcrib'd by him) have I found one Article that did not receive a full and ſatisfactory aſſent from that very Grace, Spirit, or Light of God, which firſt called me from the groſs impieties, vain entertainments, tempting glories and will-worſhips of this generation: And as I have the ſeal of God's eternal Spirit of Love upon my ſoul, as an infallible Aſſurance; ſo, ſince my firſt frequenting of them and their Aſſemblies, I have obſerv'd that holy, innocent and righteous converſation, which harmonizes with the ſeverity, circumſpection and ſelf-denying life of the Goſpel; and teſtifie (as revealed from God) that ſince thoſe Centuries, in which the Apoſtaſie eclipſt the beauty of the primitive Light, there has not been ſo glorious a diſcovery of Spiritual, Pure and Evan-

gelical Worſhip, Life and Doctrine, as God hath in his Loving-kindneſs raiſ'd the ſo much deſpiſed *Quakers*, to own, practiſe and declare amongſt the Nations; as the good old way of Holineſs, that leads from Intemperance, Vanity, Pride, Oppreſſion, and the love of this World's periſhing glories, to that everlaſting Joy and Reſt which is reſerv'd for the People of the Moſt High God. In ſhort, they are ſound in Principles, zealous for God, devout in Worſhip, earneſt in Prayer, conſtant in Profeſſion, harmleſs and exemplary in their Lives, patient in Sufferings, orderly in their Affairs, few in Words, punctual in Dealings, merciful to Enemies, Self-denying as to this Worlds Delights and Enjoyments; and to ſum up all, Standards for the God of Heaven, againſt the Pride, Cruelty, Luſt, Avarice, *&c.* of this Godleſs Generation; —whom the unborn ſhall call Bleſſed, when their Teſtimonies be finiſh'd, and they gathered into the unſpeakable Solace and poſſeſſion of God's eternal Preſence; — yet are they concluded
Pag.64 by this uncharitable Guide, *not company for Chriſtians:* but I am perſwaded, that the more diſcreet will not relax their good Opinion for his ſlanderous reflexions, but rather thence renew occaſions of further expreſſing their Candor and Humanity: And I hope their diſcreet and inoffenſive deportment will perſwade all people, they are not as deſerving their ill thoughts, as envious and ſelf-intereſſed Prieſts have endeavoured to inſinuate.

CHAP. III.

His Hypocriſie Detected.

Sect. 1.

THough manifold are the Stratagems of Satan that old Serpent, by which he does ſurprize the immortal Souls of men with moſt deplorable woes, and everlaſting miſery, yet is there none that proves ſo generally effectual as *Hypocriſie*; Its his *Myſterium Maximum*, A ſtudy and employment fit for none below the form of his Arch-Angels; ſuch make his Archeſt Emiſſaries, and moſt ſubtile

ſubtile Meanders; Sublime Devils, maſqu'd with the vizard of Sincerity, palliating themſelves from what they really are, by ſeeming what as really they are not: outſide waſh'd Platters; Wolves in Sheeps cloathing; Inſide rotten, but outſide whited-Sepulchres: In ſhort, the muddy Senſualiſt refin'd to a counterfeit Fidelity, and imitation of the form of Godlineſs, the more unqueſtionably to deceive, and ſecurely to inſinuate candid apprehenſions of his purpoſe; who is the moſt impudent diſpiſer of God, deſtroyer of Souls, contemner of Laws, perverter of Truth, and treacherous to the end; againſt whom the ſharpeſt woes are denounc'd, and puniſhments reſerv'd to eternity: — How far this Guide has rendred himſelf obnoxious to the character of a Hypocrite, it is our buſineſs mainly in this Chapter to diſcourſe; But leſt his diſſimulated Condeſcenſion, and pretended Chriſtian Inſtructions, (as inducements to Conformity) ſhould ſo far prevail upon the unacquaintance of any with his ſpirit, and notorious practice through all Revolutions, as to believe they may deſerve my obſervation and reply, (ſince 'tis irrational to argue the unſoundneſs of a Principle from the confeſt imperfections of its Defendants) I ſhall a little hint at the chiefeſt of his Reaſons; as well to manifeſt 'twas not ſo much a general as an individual concern that intereſted him in this undertaking, as to prevent (if poſſible) his ingratiating his Motives to Conformity, with the minds of ſuch as are inclinable to temporizing: he ſtates his Queſtion thus.

Sect. 2.

VWhether it be a duty for Chriſtians to hold communion with the Church of England, according to her preſent Adminiſtrations? P. 68.

Had this Guide the leaſt honeſty, it ſhould not be a queſtion with him now (although I fear he is ſcarce ſo honeſt as to make it one, my Paradox is Orthodox) or been conſcientious in his former perſwaſions; but having ever forfeited the reputation of a ſincere perſon, and not being eſteem'd other than a groſs Temporizer, I eaſily ſhall grant it very requiſit for him (whoſe belly is his god, and that minds earthly things) to commune with the Church of *England* in her preſent Adminiſtrations; but as for *Chriſtians* I ſhall not ask his leave to diſſent, unleſs he can produce better Arguments to warrant his confident Aſſertions: his firſt

runs thus: *It will not be denied by all dissenters (that have understand-*
Pag. 69 *ing and sobriety in them) but that here is a clear profession of all those fundamental points of Faith, which are accounted amongst Christians necessary unto Salvation; yea such a pure confession of other points of a secondary nature, that there's scarce any other Church in the World that God hath blest with a greater purity.*

What strange confusion, and unusual impertinency is this! would not half-witted people blush to venture abroad in print with such expressions? Surely this Guide was grosly fond of writing Books, that rather than be quiet, should with such greediness expose his ignorance to vulgar censure; for if the *Dissenters* he writes against, confess the Church they separate from to be greatly pure in Fundamentals and things of a secondary nature, how is it possible, according to good sense, they can be termed *Dissenters* in Religious matters? I shall appeal to the intelligent Reader, if this blind Guide is not faln into the ditch, that ascribes to such the title of *Dissenters*, whom he at the same time characters for absolute sons of the Church; for, do the highest Conformists to the Church of *England* acknowledge more, than that she's *pure in Fundamentals and things of a secondary nature*, and yet that such who confess her to be this, should by this silly Guide be stil'd *Dissenters!* away with this apparent Nonsense, since none can properly be so esteem'd that differs not in one or both; And how inconsistant, aswell as saucy, his expression is, that will not allow Dissenters to be *sober* and *intelligent* (when none are such in his account, that allows not the Church of *England* what they can never do, and properly be counted for Dissenters) sufficiently appears, in his admitting these very Dissenters to be *Christian Churches, and Children of the same Father*, though now he seems to represent them void of both *understanding* and *sobriety*. Where his were when these rash and unadvised words were writ, I leave for the Reader to determine.

Sect. 3.

He speaks largely of the publick Worship, loudly extolling the
Pag. 72, Constitution of the Church of *England*, professing a separation
73. therefrom to be unwarrantable; and that corruption in manners, both of Ministers and People, should be no reason for dissenting their Assemblies, *&c.*

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Contrary to the whole currant of Scripture-record, and the best accounts that have been transmitted through Ages of the Primitive Christians, who ever have withdrawn themselves from such as *held the truth in unrighteousness*; and let the world judge if *Paul* 2 *Tim.* was not thus perswaded, when he strictly enjoyn'd separation from 3.5. (not only *Schismaticks*, *Hereticks*, and *Apostates*, but) *such as held the form of Godliness*, which consisted in profession and external performances, *without* the everlasting *Power*, which alone could bring into true Obedience, and give the possession of that eternal Life, which rightly denominates people Christians, or a Christian Church: But as two strong Pillars, to maintain and underprop his Assertion, *Pag.* 82. he tells us, *otherwise God would have no Publick Worship*; As if an Assembly in a House, Field or Barn, was not as capable to worship God in spirit, as those who frequent the Parish Steeple-houses; if not, 'tis fit this Guide should pay his acknowledgements to the Roman Society (he calls *Antichrist*) for his publick Worship; But be it known to him and all the world, that as God's Spirit is not tied to places, so all Worship standing therein is truly Catholick and Publick Worship, in Field or House, whether three or three thousand; convenient places being circumstantial, not essential, to God's Worship.

Sect. 4.

His second Pillar is the example of *Zecharias*, *who* (sayes he) *disserted not his station in the Jewish Worship, notwithstanding those many* *Pag.* 75. *Corruptions that were innovated*, by which he would excuse his continuance in his Priestly Office in *Wramplingam* Parish: But if this Guide will be inform'd, he soon may see his error in this particular, (as upon occasion formerly was exprest to him) the *Jews* were selected from all other Nations, and impriviledged as God's peculiar People, by an external Law and Ordinances (all which were typical) over whom he ordained Magistrates, and a Priesthood, which had no relation to any other Constitution that was contemporary, or should succeed, but were to continue till the times of Reformation, and then to be abrogated; yet inasmuch as Antitypes are represented by their Types, it must be granted, that many Legal Institutions did signifie and shadow-forth what afterwards should follow; since therefore it must needs be granted, that the Jewish State relates no further to us than typically, it will not be

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unneceſſary to examine how far this Guide can ſecure himſelf, and juſtifie his many turnings, from the confeſt conſtancy of faithfull *Zecharias*.

Conſider (1.) that the *Jews* were a People ſeparated from among the Nations, as his viſible Church, to whom he gave that intituling ſign of Circumciſion.

2. That their Temple, Worſhip and Laws, moral, judicial and ceremoninal, were indiſputably of Divine Inſtitution.

3. That as thoſe who were their Prieſts, were by the high Prieſt anointed thereunto; ſo being once dedicated, were to officiate with integrity and conſtancy at the Altar.

4. That no addition was to be admitted to what God had ſo punctually ordered, in any Circumſtance. Now unleſs this Guide can prove the Church of *England* the Antitype;

1. In being the Circumciſion in Spirit, by which ſhe is rightly intituled to the Priviledges of the Spiritual Jewiſh Church.

2. Can as infallibly and unqueſtionably prove the Divine Inſtitution of her Faith, Worſhip and Diſcipline,

3. That her Miniſtry is the ſpiritually Anointed of God, by that one High-Prieſt after the Order of *Melchizedek*, and by him commiſſionated to preach the everlaſting Goſpel.

4. And that in Faith, Worſhip and Diſcipline ſhe remains as clear and ſingle from all Inventions, Traditions and Ceremonies (thoſe only allowed as have their footing in the Divine Appointment and Order of God) unleſs I ſay this be made good, 'twill declare great weakneſs in any to allow this Guide to argue from *Zecharias*'s caſe to his own; —— I grant that whoſoever is annointed by Jeſus Chriſt to preach his everlaſting Salvation, ought to do it inceſſantly, not mattering the oppoſition or revolution of Powers; and that NO defect in the generality can or ought to unminiſter him, but rather that he faithfully ſhould decry thoſe Impieties, and keep his ſtation on God's behalf, which righteous *Zecharias* did, whoſe bold withſtanding their Inventions, and honeſt deſire of preſerving that Law pure, of which he was inſtituted Prieſt, procured no leſs than his Martyrdom, from the Cruelty of thoſe vain Superſtitioniſts. But what's this to *Clapham's* caſe? *Zecharias* was anointed by the High-Prieſt; whence was *Clapham's* Ordination? *Zecharias* was murder'd for oppoſing their unrighte-

unrighteousness and wicked Traditions: where did *Clapham* do so? but has he not preach'd for and against what he at times has own'd to keep his Parish. *Zecharias* would not dispense with their Additions to God's Institutions; has *Clapham* done so too? how comes he then to call the Church of *England*, *Pure in secondary matters*, to wit, her forms of Prayer, Anthems, Responses, Litanies, Baby-Baptisme, Crosses, Altars, Steeple-houses East and West, Bowings, Organs, Quiresters, Surplices, Caps, Rochets, Hoods, with much more such like trash than my memory will serve at present to insert, which fills up the English Worship, and are known by persons moderately read in Story, to have been brought forth by the womb of dark Popery, that sink of Antichristianism: — But as there ought to be one Temple, Worship and Priesthood to make *Clapham*'s case resemble *Zecharias*'s, so that his may approach this Guide's, let us suppose amongst the *Jews* three several Temples, Worships and Priesthoods, call'd *Presbyterian*, *Independent*, *Episcopal*: If *Zecharias* had first been of the Presbyterian-Priesthood, and as that should decline in esteem, imbrace the Independents, till by revolution of Government both were violently suppreſt, as to the exercise of their Consciences towards God, by the Episcopal; and then that *Zacherias* should divorce his Independent Spouse, crying *All Hail* unto the new Establishment, as *Clapham* undeniably did, he might have quoted *Zacherias* with more honour, to his now shameful retreat: but his constant keeping of his station in faithfulness to God, sharply rebukes this Guide's manifest Infidelity both to God and Men.

Sect. 5.

His next great Argument to enforce Compliance, is that Sovereignty bestow'd on *Rulers*, who (sayes he) *in particular Circumstances undetermined by God, have power to order and settle things according to the general Rules laid down in the Word*; Instancing in several Jewish Kings: Although I need not farther trouble thee nor my self, than barely to recommend the foregoing Page to thy perusal; yet lest the matter may not be so evident, I shall a little observe his very great self-contradiction; his words are these: *There is not the like reason to determine all Circumstances in the Christian Churches, as was in the Jewish Church, the one being in its minority,* P. 104. P. 103.

rity, the other grown up to a state of greater liberty. A Boy when he goes to School, in every particular he is stinted to his work; but when he goes to the University, he only hath general Rules for his study, and is left to his own disposition for order and manner of his studies. Is it not obvious that he does confute himself, and so has sav'd me the pains of making any other Answer than what ariseth from his own Assertion and Similitude to prove it; He sayes the Christian-Church is grown to *greater liberty*; How so, if still subject to be imposed upon by Civil Power? is not the slavery greater, since that the Jews were *stinted* by God himself, but we by men, and that according to their fallible apprehensions? yet with such severity is obedience enjoyn'd, as Nonconformity costs nothing less than the price of Liberty and Estate. But since by *Boyes* at School he means the *Jewish Church*, and by *those* fitted for the *University* he intends a *state of liberty* in secondary matters, what follows but that our Schoolmasters the Magistrates are dismist, and we being under an Evangelical Constitution, are in those matters left to that *greater liberty* relating to the Gospel-state; which flatly contradicts that power he in other places does ascribe unto them: Nay, if I should make the most of his Similitude for my advantage, how apparent would it be that the very *Rulers* in the Jewish-State were *Boyes*, and *stinted* in all Religious Circumstances, and consequently not to be our *Schoolmasters* under a dispensation of greater freedom, for then the change would be to our apparent loss and injury; so that *others* being free aswel as *Rulers*, for them to command is gross usurpation; and for any to yeeld obedience is nothing less than High-Treason against the King of Conscience, and a betraying of themselves into the *Schoolboys* state again.—— Sometimes he sayes the Scriptures are clear in this particular; in other places, promiscuous; but his best Argument is the Magistrate, for never wanting a ready complyance to their commands (come what will) he has better learnt Interest than to set his Opinion in Competition; — However, I shall propose these Queries, which he may answer if he please, or any else.

Qu. 1. Whether if seven Powers make seven distinct interpretations of Religious Principles, and erect seven distinct Modes of Worship, according to what they apprehend from the Scriptures; they all may be submitted to notwithstanding their contrariety?

Quer. 2.

Qu. 2. Whether these seven different Principles and modes of Worship, enacted to be conformed to, in these seven Dominions can be rightly said to proceed from the Spirit of God, the Unity; and not their erroneous apprehensions?

Qu. 3. Whether any Prescriptions concerning Faith and Worship, should be allow'd or obey'd, if not from that unerring Spirit in which God's true and only Worship stands?

Qu. 4. Whether any Magistrates now in being, do or can pretend to that Infallibility?

Qu. 5. Where is that Gospel-Scripture, which impowers Magistrates to concern themselves in Religious matters?

Qu. 6. Whether it be congenious, or suitable to the second Covenant and times of Reformation, when the Law is written in the heart, and the Spirit put in the inward parts; where there is but one King, and one Lawgiver; where the Offices and assistance of Sun, Moon and Starrs are no more required, but the Lamb *Christ Jesus* is their Light, their Knowledge, their Guide, their All in All; for Rulers to interpose their Civil Authority to pull down or set up Religion?

Qu. 7. Whether the first Institution of Magistracy propos'd a Jurisdiction over Consciences, or only the preservation and prosperity of the People in civil and external matters?

Sect. 6.

Many are his Cautions, and as many his Contradictions, too many for my observation: In short, the end of all his tenderness to Dissenters, and kind titles of *Christian Churches, Children of the same Father, &c.* I find, is a perswading of all into an acknowledgment of the Church of *England.* But *Reader*, if thou wilt know the reason why this person *Now* appears so earnest in his discourse for all to march in his *conforming steps*, and thus confidently imposes himself a Guide on all to the true Religion, as if we had been at a loss till now both for the *true Religion* and *a Guide*, I ask thy patience and thy credit in the perusal of this *notorious* (tho contracted) *story of his life*, which a necessity is upon me to insert, that such who otherwise may let his Hypocritical Insinuations gain their esteem, may (if they please) be furnisht with an Antidote against the infection of their nature.

It is not long ſince (being in thoſe parts) I had ſome hours converſe with this perſon, and amongſt the many things we touch'd upon, I charg'd him with his retreat from a certain People to whom he formerly had a Religious relation: upon which he ſent me this, with other particulars, by Epiſtle, in a way of Apology; *That he never had profeſt himſelf of any party, nor would come under any diſtinguiſhing denomination of Presbyterian, Independent, Epiſcopal, owning no other than that of a Chriſtian*, avowing, that *whatever apprehenſions people had concerning the Church of England, and notwithſtanding ſeveral went as far as New-England to enjoy purer Ordinances, yet for our parts* (including himſelf as a conſtant ſon of the Church) *we can witneſs the Lord's preſence is amongſt us.*

To all which I then anſwer'd ſomething, though not ſo amply; that ſince he ſeems to liſt himſelf ſo early amongſt the members of the Church of *England*, where has he been during the time of her Captivity and Exile? did he for Conſcience-ſake (oppoſing *Covenant, Engagement, &c.*) quit the Land, contenting himſelf rather in the quality of a poor begging Prieſt beyond the Seas, than to imbrace the perſwaſions of thoſe Powers, which had reduc'd the reſidue of his Brethren to extream poverty? or turn'd he Trencher-Chaplin, Tutor, *&c*? did he traverſe the Country, Sprinkling, Marrying, Churching, Burying, the common trade of thoſe ejected Prieſts? And can he ſay, that whilſt the King and Biſhops were incapacitated by Exile to act as Officers in the Church and State, he own'd the one for Supream in matters Civil and Eccleſiaſtical; and the others, for ſo many Apoſtolical heads in Chriſt's Church? Did he proteſt againſt the Cruelty of thoſe Powers, in the clear ſubverſion of both? What Priſon was he in? what Bonds did he endure, what Loſs ſuſtain, Teſtimony bear, and Loyalty expreſs, on the behalf of his Epiſcopal Faith, and its Defender?— Alas! But was he not in all thoſe ſtrange occurrences of times, and variety of changes, to be found Prieſt of *Wramplingam* in *Norfolk*? At the beginning of the Wars, a moſt preciſe Stickler for a Reformation, extolling the great Neceſſity aſwel as Righteouſneſs of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, encouraging others thereunto, both by his example and doctrine: Bold for the *Directory*, and buſie at chuſing *Elders*; and ſo went under the notion of a *Presbyterian*: But 'twas not long before the *Independents*, through their greater

Courage

Courage and Policy, had undermin'd and vanquisht t'others Interest, and when possest of the Authority, he saw 'twas folly to expect a Sallery as Guide, in that way the Governing-Party of the Nations had rejected, and therefore was obliged to list himself a Volunteer in *Jo. Munny's Independent Congregation*; twas then the beheaded King was by this Guide both preach't & printed, as *a Toe of that Image the little Stone, cut out of the Mountain without hands, was to smite*; and therefore says, *the fall of the ten Kingdoms was begun, the Lord is risen out of his habitation, gainsay not; for who seeth not the alteration is of the Lord?* And in his Answer to an Objection, that this Prophecy was accomplisht when this Nation fell from Popery, sayes he, *Doctrinally it was, but not Politically; the Government hath continued the same, yea and hard enough to the Saints* (alias NONCONFORMISTS) *none can deny it. Now the Change this Prophecy speaks of respects the Government.* In another place, sayes he, *There can be no clearer evidence that God is about this work of breaking down this great IMAGE, and smiting the very Feet and Toes thereof, than this present Victory over the Scottish Forces at* Dunbar, *(which we are now to render Thanksgiving to God for) the cause of this War being, Whether this IMAGE shall be upheld, or the Feet and Toes be broken*; In short, *O ye Honoured Worthies, whom the Lord hath raised up to effect these great Changes, carry on the Lord's Work; That your People may not have cause to say, We have changed our TYRANTS, not our TYRANNY*; Although *Providence seems to put an Impossibility of setling Government in the Former way:* But time hath proved him both a Temporizer, and a false Prophet. 'Twas also then he sought, if possible, to ingratiate himself with the Powers and People of the Land, by his most invective and false discourse against the harmless *Quakers*, with a large Dedicatory Epistle to *O. Cromwel*, allow'd by him of *England, Scotland, Ireland, &c. Protector*, to whom, amongst other extraordinary Complements, I cannot let pass these expressions, where he invites him *as God's Delegate, in honour to Jesus Christ, and out of love to the Churches of Christ, for whose welfare you have this Great Power committed to You, to stop these Seducers, &c.* concluding thus; *The Lord of Heaven and Earth bless your Highness with the continuance of his gracious Presence with you, that as you have done valiantly in the high places of the Field,* (that is, fought against King and Bishops)

Ston smi. the Ima. on the feet. p. 16,17.

P. 23.

P. 15, 16.

Pref. p. 3.

Pref p 5.

Pag. 24

ſhops) *ſo you govern as righteouſly and happily in the Gates of the City.* O groſs diſſimulation! Now 'tis he turns *Engagement-man*, and is employ'd by the ſeveral Churches in *Norfolk*, to *R. Cromwel* on the Death of *Oliver*, as their Repreſentative about that Petition or Addreſs made by the Prieſts in general, which terms the Father *Moſes*, and the Son the *Joſhua* that ſhould conduct them to the *Holy-Land*; But he being by the Projections and angry reſentments of the *Long-Parliament*, diveſted of his uſurped Authority, this Guide finds out a very honourable Epithite for it; which had not long taſted of Power, before another Revolution took its place: but I muſt needs confeſs, that when 'twas noiſed A King was coming in, and the Church of *England* to be reſtored to all her ancient Emoluments (ſo called) this Guide grew ſeemingly dejected, and very forward in expreſſing his diſlike againſt their Spiritual Lordſhips, and not leſs contumelioufly (as he now would think) both of her Worſhip and Diſcipline, hoping the *Preſbyterians* Teſtimony of Allegiance, in their zealouſly aſſiſting to facilitate the King's Return, would ſo far intereſt him in their concerns, as not wholly to be excluded from the exerciſe of their Religion in the Land; But when 'twas manifeſt that nothing under an open Conformity would purchaſe the enjoyment of their Pariſhes, (whatever becomes of them) this Guide ſlinks from his *Independant Church*, and *Presbyterian hopes*, reads the *Common-Prayer-Book*, ſubſcribes the *Articles*, changes *Oliver*, *Richard*, or *Parliament*, for *Charles (once a Toe of the Beaſt, that the little Stone was to ſmite)* of *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, *&c.* And in the place of *Chriſts Churches*, the *Church of England*, with the whole Tribe how ever dignified or diſtinguiſhed; the beheaded King (once the firſt broken Toe of the Image, now) he commemorates with an Anniverſary Sermon; and, as the top of all, boldly renounces his ſo ſolemnly-taken *League and Covenant*; — What temporizing's this! O what unheard-of Hypocriſie is here! But *Reader*, what's thy opinion of the matter? Can *Oliver* be *Moſes? Richard, Joſhua?* and *Charles, Defender of the Faith*, altogether? whoſe Intereſts were ſo oppoſite, as the laſt to be exiled, and kept ſo by both: With whom was God's preſence in all theſe times? the Church of *England?* If ſo, then not with thoſe that turn'd her out, where *Clapham* had his Pariſh: How plainly have his actions unmaskt the

groſs

groſs diſſimulation of his heart, and theſe corrupt fruits explain'd the poiſonous nature of the tree that brought them forth? But leſt I may be thought to wrong him, as if it were impoſſible for one who pretends himſelf a Chriſtian Miniſter to be guilty of ſuch abominable time-ſerving, *Reader* peruſe theſe paſſages, where he confidently affirms ſuch to have been, *the beſt, wiſeſt, and moſt judicious Chriſtians, who under all thoſe great Changes and Revolutions, amongſt us of latter times, have endeavoured the maintaining the Fundamental Doctrines of the Goſpel, even to a degree of complyance in things of a lower nature*; in which he poſitively concludes all perſons, (from *Canterbury* to the meaneſt Curat in the Nation, as alſo Seculars in their reſpective places) have been to blame, both as to their underſtanding and wiſdom, in not yeelding with *Clapham* in thoſe ſmaller matters, (*viz.* an expulſion of the Church of *England*, a diſowning of Monarchical Authority, or right in the *Stuarts* Family; Preaching and printing it a Toe of the Beaſt, extolling the Covenant, taking the Engagement, being a *Presbyterian*, an *Independent*, a *Millenary*, *&c.* praying, and ſwearing for Parliament, Protectors, Parliament again, at laſt King and Biſhops) ſince thoſe who have left King, Biſhops, Common-Prayer, &c. and eſpouſed the Intereſt of thoſe other Powers, who eſtabliſht other Methods both in Church and State, *were the beſt and moſt judicious Chriſtians*; but to excuſe this brazen Impudence and Hypocriſie, he concludes, *Let not any Principles you have inconſiderately taken up ſo far engage you, as to make you loath to return to wayes of truth and ſoberneſs*; *But it would be conſidered, it's no diſgrace for the wiſeſt, holieſt, and moſt learnedſt men to retreat, in ſome controverſal principles and practices.* Reader, will this fig-leaf garment cover the ſhame of this Guide's nakedneſs, from thy diſcerning and cenſure? I hope not; but does not his covering ſtand in need of one, who ſayes *the holieſt, wiſeſt, and moſt learnedſt men* may ſtill be ſuch, and yet *walk not in the wayes of truth and ſobriety:* What weakneſs, what ignorance, what ſtrange confuſion's here! from which I alſo muſt infer, that ſince he is but here of late return'd *to the wayes of truth and ſobriety*, he all his life-time before walk'd in the way of error and madneſs; Judge then how fit he was to preach others into the knowledge of the truth, and a ſober life: Have not the people given him money for that which was not bread? And further, I would

Epiſt. p. 6, 7.
B. p. 98.
P. 106.
P. 108.

would obſerve, 'twas in that time of error and madneſs he writ thoſe wicked ſlanders againſt us who are called *Quakers*.

Sect. 7.

I would obſerve before I finiſh, that the entendment of his Book is not to preſs Conformity to any one in oppoſition to all other Conſtitutions, otherwiſe than in a temporary ſence; for ſince it is his principle that ſuch are the *moſt wiſe and judicious Chriſtians, that have in all Revolutions complied in leſſer matters*; it follows, that the Church of *England* is no further concerned in this diſcourſe, than whilſt ſhe keeps the Power and Magiſtracy on her ſide; for which of the ſeven ſons, *viz. Lutherans, Calviniſts, Anabaptiſts, Arminians, Epiſcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents*, (being of the ſame Father) with that known, or unknown, &c. ſhall gain the Prerogative, he by his own principles ſtands ready to imbrace him; ſo that no longer than any of them have external Force to warrant their Commands and Impoſitions, no longer ſhould they be acknowledged; but any other of them (though remote in ſmaller matters, holding the ſame Fundamentals) is quite as eſteemable in this Guid's account, and thoſe injudicious that concur not with his ſentiments; by which he does at once commend rather than excuſe his paſt Compliance with thoſe ſeveral perſwaſions, and palpably diſcovers his readineſs to do the like, as otherwiſe conceiving it unwiſe, (they being the *moſt wiſe, and beſt Chriſtians, that yeeld in leſſer matters*) — But that which renders ſuch Alterations ſuſpitious to ſober men, is the never finding them convenient till change of Government makes them ſo; for amongſt the many tranſactions of this perſon's life, I ſhould not forget, that when the fifth-Monarchy Principle was in eſteem, which would by no means diſpenſe with any Earthly Monarch (as belonging to the great *Image*) *J. Clapham* prints a diſcourſe in the vindication of it, but the potent Argument of *Cromwel's* aſſuming it under the ſpecious title of *Protector*, clearly confuted this great *Millenary*, as he at large acknowledges in his Epiſtle Dedicatory to him before his Book, anciently writ againſt the *Quakers*; — ſo that the only *conſtancy* I can remarque of *J. Clapham*, has been the keeping of his Pariſh through his very great *inconſtancy*, in his perſwaſions.

P. 17, 18.

I hope by this time, *Reader*, thou haſt well conſidered and narrowly

rowly inſpected the qualities of this Guide, which ſurely manifeſt themſelves as deteſtable as any I have ever met withal; his Ignorance, Impudence and Hypocriſie, but above all his hackney, mercinary ſpirit; which doubtleſs needs muſt leave ſuch ſtrong impreſſions as ſhall for ever make thee diſeſteem his undertaking, And that the *Quakers* Innocency, who he has ſo unworthily ſlandered, without a proof to warrant his Aſperſions, ſhall not appear the leſs deſerving favour and encouragement from thee; however he has not been remiſs in putting all his ſtratagems on foot to render them obnoxious to the fury and diſpleaſure of ſuch who have power to execute the reſentments of their minds, but rather let them have thy countenance, as a people whoſe upright and induſtrious converſation renders them not leſs ſerviceable than exemplary.

Thus have I finiſh'd my third Chapter, and haſten to my fourth, which is a ſhort Compariſon of ſome of his Contradictions; that whilſt he runs inſultingly upon us for ignorant, erroneous, and contemptible, it may appear that his diſcourſe requires an *Errata*.

CHAP. IIII.

His Contradictions Compared.

Sect. 1.

GOD hath in the framing of mans nature laid ſo deep an impreſſion of Religion, that there is no Nation but doth judg themſelvs intereſſed therein. Pag. 1.

In the framing of the nature of Man there are ſuch Principles of Religion engraven in him, as cannot be razed out. P. 8, 15, 16.

But as 'tis a thing all profeſs themſelves intereſſed in, ſo there's nothing men are at greater difference about; ſome worſhip the Sun, others the Moon or the Stars, & almoſt any creature from whence they received any benefit. Pag. 2.

We read in the ſtory of the Iſraelites, *the vanity of mans nature in matters of Religion.* P. 3 4, 5.

If

Observ. Is God's impression divided, or the capacity he gave man so blinded as that it cannot discern betwixt *Himself*, *Sun*, *Moon*, or *Stars*? and is it possible that *mans nature should be religious*, and its *principles not to be razed out*, and yet *vain* in those matters? and what *spiritual benefit* did any ever receive from *Sun*, *Moon* or *Stars*, that induced them to worship and adore them?

How greatly then doth it behove every man to make a wise choice of that God he intends to serve, and that Religion he means to live and die in? P. 2.

There is a necessity men should be of some Religion. p. 14.

To chuse deliberately what God we will serve, and then resolve to cleave unto him. p. 15.

Mans eternal happiness or misery depends on the right knowing God, or his mistake about it. P. 2.

On the right chusing ones Religion, or our mistake about it, eternal happiness or misery, life or death depends. p. 16.

The dream that every man may be saved in his own Religion, if he be true to it, is more becoming Turks than Christians. p. 17.

Observ. O strange contradiction! has man a liberty given, nay, advice grounded on necessity to be of some Religion, and not only to chuse *what God he will*, but also *to live and die in his service*; and yet *damn'd* if he hits not on the *true one*? What's this more, than to say it's necessary man should do somewhat, though he be dam'd for it? And if it's a *dream* to expect Salvation in being *true to some Religion*, is it not a lethargy of impertinency, *that it's necessary to be of some Religion, and to live and die in it?*

There are many false Religions in the world. p. 15.

There being such diversities of Religions, you had need to have your eyes about you. p. 26.

It's a mistake to think that there is such a multitude of Religious in the world. p. 27.

There are, to speak properly, but four Religions. p. 28.

Observ. These cross sayings must needs be manifest to the weakest capacity; for if he speaks *properly* on one side, he speaks very *improperly* on the other.

Sect.

Its not sufficient that it be delivered to you by tradition from Ancestors, by education from Godly-Parents, commended by the practice of wise and pious persons,— but make a wise choice for your selves. p. 25.

Those that take up Religion because it's profest in the Country, and commended by example, how slight are they therein? p. 19.

Man must discern the verity and certainty of these doctrins, that he may venture his soul upon them; for which end its exceeding necessary to be conversant in those treatises which prove the verity of the Christian Religion. p. 10.

I add one Rule of Caution more against a common, but dangerous mistake: Take heed of setting up your own apprehensions of the sense of Scripture: though Fundamentals are plainly laid down, yet points controverted are hidden from ordinary understandings, that know not the Languages and proper Idioms of Scripture, and other advantages of Learning. p. 109.

In one side this Guide is for every individuals chusing from a reason in himself; in the other, that he should accept things from the apprehensions and greater skill of others. *Obser.*

But it's unseasonable to be contending about things not so clearly revealed in Scripture; p. 44.

But darkly laid down. p. 47.

Take heed of that great mistake, that nothing is to be admitted, in and about the Administrations of the Church of Christ, but what is held forth in Scripture. p. 99, 100.

Search the Scriptures, and look well to them, they are your Chard and Compass to steer your Course by; try all things by them. p. 47.

O strange confusion! A Rule, and no Rule; revealed, and not revealed: Is it not unreasonable to suppose that Christ, instead of rendring his Church more glorious & infallible than ever, should leave her destitute of information in those things which concern *Observ.*

her peace, since contrary apprehensions about them have been the ground of all Division and Persecution through Ages, and will be yet with most, notwithstanding this Guide's directions? — Can the Scriptures be clear in deep, and not in shallow matters?

God hath committed the care of Religion, and the settlement of it, to those in Authority, in their Dominions, in such a way as they judg most agreeable to the Rule of the Word. p.68.

They are to see all be administred according to the same; and in the particular circumstances undetermined by God, they have a power to order and settle things according to the general Rules laid down in the Word. p. 104.

It's not sufficient that 'tis commanded by the Laws of the Land, but make a wise choice for your selves. p.25.

Let every one be fully perswaded in his own mind. p. 53.

And men that act according to Reason will look into the Oracles of God himself, wherein God hath revealed his Will concerning Faith and VVorship. p. 9.

Observ. If God has invested Magistrates with the power of Interpretation, and settlement of Religious matters accordingly; is it not absurd to bid men chuse for themselves, since they are to be concluded by anothers choice? and how the Oracles of God should be perspicuous to all understandings, and yet need an Interpreter, (I mean the Magistrate) I would fain understand.

Sect. 3.

The Christian Religion was confirm'd by many signs; by the means of propagation of it by weak and unlearned men, by whose preaching it overspread the world. p.31.

The Fundamentals of Christianity are so plainly laid down in Scripture, that the weakest Christians may understand them. pag. 110.

The Quakers *in respect of their want of learning and outward accomplishments, are contemptible.* P. 62.

Controverted points are hidden from ordinary understandings that know not the Languages, and proper Idioms of Scripture, and customs of the Church, and other advantages of Learning, that its ordinarily impossible they should find out the mind of God therein. p.111.

What

What Contradiction is here! that what he designs to have been proof or argument, to have recommended the more unquestionably the belief of the Christian Religion in old times, to the primitive Christians, he here should make the reason why he rejects and reviles the *Quakers* and their Testimony; — and that he should tell us, the Spirit they received perfectly inform'd them, and yet that Learning is to be the only means of knowing God's mind in these dayes, whilst he confesses at the same time, the weakest Christian may understand the Fundamentals of Religion. *Observ.*

God is to be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth— p.70.

The essence of Prayer lies in lifting up true desires to God in the Name of Christ. p. 71.

To pray, is part of God's Worship, but whether it be in a Book or out of it, is no part at all. pag. 109.

For who is there that knows not that forms of Prayer have been of exceediag long continuance in the Christian Church. p. 91.

Set-forms, are not only used and prescribed in the Old Testament, but also in the New. p. 94.

How! Worship in Spirit, and yet by words of man's prescription! Can any man bring the Spirit to so many words, to begin with *I*, and end with *R*? or who knows the Spirit's mind so punctually as to prescribe for Generations to come the words it will use, for all persons and conditions that may be in the world? who can pretend to know all states, that he may write prayers for each? Why not forms of sighs and groans? — Was it not a Spiritual-Worship *Christ Jesus* set up, above sixteen hundred years ago, in opposition to the Jewish one, and all other particular Worships in the World? which are known to have been forms, and such as this Guide pleads for, at least the Jewish; and produce me a Form put forth and establish't by any of the Apostles, who were faithful in God's House; — But did not Forms creep up when the primitive Power and Spirit was lost, imitating Prayer, but not Praying? And did not *Tertullian* in his Apology, (who is generally rank't in the beginning of the third Century) write, that the Christians prayed not by Book, but as they were moved by the Spirit of God, or to that purpose; And I challenge this Guide, or any living, to make appear that a Form of Prayer was establish'd till sometime *Observ.*

after his death; And this Guide himself acknowledges in his *Stone smiting the Image on the feet*, that the Apostacy was began, *the Empire yeelded up to the Papacy, the primitive purity of Christian Worship, fail'd, and became corrupted:* and let him tell me if the Worship of the Church of *England* had not its beginning there, at least those things he calls *Additaments and Modes*; so that they are not concluded as necessary by any Light or Prudence, but innovated by a vain, formal, and superstitious nature: Besides, examine the contradiction of his own Assertions, *God must be worshipped in Spirit*, and yet *in Form: Forms are not only of Legal, but of Gospel-Institution*, and yet *whether Prayer be within Book or without Book it matters not.*

Ston smi. the Ima. on the feet. p. 29.

Its a vain delusion to think that the Spirit should discover all deep Mysteries. p. 111.

The Spirit of God teaches not by such immediate Enthusiasms [or Revelations] p. 111.

Wherein you are otherwise-minded, He will REVEAL the Truth [the Mystery] *unto you.* pag. 46.

God will REVEAL his Secrets to such as fear Him, and lead you by his Spirit. p. 46, 47.

Obser. If it be a vain delusion to say the Spirit only can discover all deep Mysteries, pray what is it to say it shall reveal the Truth, which comprehends all? and that it will reveal God's Secrets, (what are they but Mysteries?) And if God's Spirit does not teach immediatly, why does *Clapham* say that it will REVEAL God's Secrets, and lead us? which implies the familiarity and constancy of his presence. What contradiction's this!

Sect. 4.

For who is there of the highest Form of Christians that are ascertained that in every particular doctrine and practice, that these be in the right, seeing the best of men are imperfect, and may and do erre. p. 53.

Let the Doctrins and Mysteries of Faith you receive, influence your hearts & lives, sanctifie & change them. Rest not in the Form of Godlineß without the Power of it. p. 27.

God only is to be sanctified of all them that come near to him. p. 70.

Wha

Who is in all things free from error? What Church or Person upon Earth? p.65.

For what Churches are so pure but they have some defects, errors, or corruptions? p.81.

The Quakers *trust in a pretended sinless perfection.* p. 63.

In the Church of England *is a professed renunciation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, with ALL their sinful works and lusts.* p. 70.

Let this Truth influence your hearts and lives, so as you sincerely obey the Gospel, and live in the daily expectation of the coming of the Lord, and give diligence to be found of him without SPOT, and BLAMELES. p. 40.

Here's the perfection of his contradictions; — 1. Is it sence to affirm that Societies are sanctified and chang'd, and yet imperfect, corrupt, and erroneous? 2. If God is to be sanctified of all that come near unto him, then such as can't sanctifie him, cannot approach him; but *Clapham*, and such as cry, They have no health in them, and consequently unsanctified, cannot sanctifie the Lord, therefore can't they approach him. 3. He asks the question, *What Church is without corruptions?* and as patly answers it, *The Church of* England (for she) *renounces the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, with all their deceitful works and lusts.* So that perfection is an Article of *Clapham*'s Faith, as being of that Church. 4. And why should he be angry that the *Quakers trust in a sinless perfection*, as that which will exceedingly rejoyce at the appearance of their Lord? Since he has found so suitable a defence, that in so many words admonishes all to *give diligence to be found of him in peace, without SPOT, and BLAMELES.* *Obser.*

And Reader, though he never did intend by his Discourse a Vindication of the *Quakers* Principles, yet may'st thou easily perceive how he is left of God in this conceited undertaking, to manifold gross contradictions; and whil'st he would be thought competent to enervate such Opinions as don't *quadrate*, or agree with his, his Book is made his confutation: — Nor have I hinted at the moity, because I would avoid prolixity, professing in sincerity, I scarce have ever read such a compendium of absurdities, although, when first I saw his Treatise, I was in expectation

on

on of some essay, or new *Atlantis* in Religion, as might (if not) deserve an approbation of its Doctrine, at least have manifested the ingenuity of its Author; but to find the gleanings of some mouldy Authors, and dark suggestions of unwarrantable Tradition, venture to put a cheat upon the World, under the specious Title of a *Guide*, (who had not gone a page before he lost his way) at once exprest more ignorance and impudence than any piece I have met with since I have held the least intelligence with Books; and I hope what hath been already writ, will by thee be esteem'd a sufficient answer to this Guide, and so unvizard his designs, as neither thou or any else from thence shall take the least encouragement to embrace his Religion, or give entertainment to his false Aspersions, but rather am willing to believe, that persons ingenious and deliberate, will never look upon a time-serving Priest, thus circumstantiated with great variety of misdemeanours, or any thing his parts and mallice can suggest, so favourably, as to accept his sentiments to the apparent prejudice of such, whose carriage and correspondence amongst men, are in the general confest to be discreet and friendly; for if the Persons invested with Authority shall once admit of implicit apprehensions for their Rule, and that from one whose very actions carry such undeniable malignity with them, those differing Perswasions against whom he may have treasur'd up revenge, must certainly expect the effects of their severity and displeasure, let them in other matters, where publick preservation is concern'd, appear never so ready and contributory.

But such procedures relish rather of Romish bigottry, and inhumane inquisition, than Christian tenderness and humane prudence: For as a gentle treatment of Dissenters has ever been the most effectual way for uniting differences in Religion, (at least preserving of the peace) so should all Magistrates remember (if they please) that their Authority cannot reasonably extend beyond the end for which it was appointed, which being not to inthrone themselves Sovereign Moderators in causes purely Conscientious, and relating to a World in which they cannot pretend the least Jurisdiction, but onely to maintain the impartial execution of Justice, in regulating civil matters with most advantage to the tranquility, enrichment and reputation of their Territories, they should not

bend

bend their Forces, nor imploy their ſtrength, to gratifie the ſelf-ſeeking ſpirit of the Prieſts, or any private intereſt whatſoever; -- An Exerciſe below the dignity of their Office, and much too narrow for that univerſal influence it ſhould have upon the Publick.

Sect. 5.

But to conclude, judicious Reader, hold not ſo ſlight an eſteem of the *Quakers* Principles, becauſe decri'd by ſuch as either don't know them, or well know an entertainment of them would put a period to their gain: But ſoberly examine if there be any other way to perfect Victory over thoſe corruptions and fleſhly luſts, to which we naturally are addicted, and moſt infallibly occaſion that diſorder and confuſion we ſee all Nations ſubject to, than what they Preach up, Write for, and Walk by, even that *Grace of God which brings Salvation, (from all iniquity)* which ſayes this Guide, *is the ſum of all*, viz. *The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World:* Which being really attended on, its inſtructions cordally imbrac'd, and holy motions intirely reſign'd unto, with that noble, but neceſſary reſolution, *of deſpiſing all ſhame, and patiently enduring the Croſs*; ſhall make thee a Righteous Magiſtrate, a Reformed Prieſt, or a Holy Citizen of the *New Jeruſalem:* It leads into circumſpection, and pure conformity to the Divine Pleaſure: Doubts and Fears, Sighs and Tears, ſhall fly away, and in that faithful ſtayedneſs of heart on God, We can, according to our reſpective meaſures, ſay, *He makes the Rivers of his Peace to overflow, and never-failingly bedews with the refreſhment of his glorious Preſence*: Which Reader, that thou mayeſt, and all men really experiment, is the very earneſt deſire of him, that God in everlaſting love has made a Friend to the *True Religion*, but an enemy to every *falſe Way*. P: 43.

W. P.

ERRATA.

Pag. 3. lin. 24. *for* they *read* he. & l. 23. *f. are* r. *his* P. 7. l *laſt*, *r.* denominate. P. 9 l. 24. *f. r.* ambitious. P. 11. l. 29. *f.* mawy, *r.* many. P. 23. l. 3. *f.* impiouſy, *r.* imperiouſly. P. 32 chap. 2. r. *His Aſperſions.* P. 36. l. 35 *f.* clenſed, *r.* clenſeth. P. 37. *l. 6. r.* have them in, take &c. & *l. 25. f.* hard, *r.* hid.

Truth Exalted;

IN

A ſhort, but ſure, Teſtimony againſt all thoſe *Religions*, *Faiths*, and *VVorſhips* that have been formed and followed in the darkneſs of Apoſtacy.--- And for that Glorious Light which is now riſen, and ſhines forth in the Life and Doctrine of the deſpiſed *Quakers*, as the alone good old way of Life and Salvation.

Preſented to *Princes*, *Prieſts*, and *People*, that they may repent, believe, and obey.

BY

WILLIAM PENN the Younger, whom Divine Love conſtrains in a holy contempt to trample on *Egypts* glory, not fearing the Kings wrath, having beheld the Magiſty of him who is Inviſible.

London, Printed in the Year, 1668.

TO
Princes, Priests, and People.

JEHOVAH, the everlasting Power, that spans out the Heavens with his span, and measures the Waters in the hollow of his hand, before whom all Nations, Tongues and People, are less than the drop to the Ocean, or the Sand to the Sea shoar; who said, Let all things be, and they were, and by the same Word of his Might, preserves them to this very day, is Holy, Merciful, and Just; and, as the most excellent part of the whole Creation, made he Man, the Image of himself, by investing him with that Righteous Principle, and innocent Life, which gave him Dominion and Authority over all his works, allowing him to eat of every Tree, saving that of Good and Evil, of which if he did eat, he should certainly die. Happy had it been for *Adam* and his Posterity, had he obeyed Gods Commands; but transgression by disobedience getting entrance, he soon died to his Innocent State, in which God created him, and became alive in the Dominion sin had over him, being now as one without Law, in whose fallen State all Nations have been, and are, (let their Professions seem never so great, and their Sacrifices never so many) that live in the disobedient Nature, and so strangers to that Immortality and life Eternal, the first *Adam* became dead and darkened to by his transgression, and which the second *Adam* raises to the knowledge and possession of, by the power of his quickning

Spirit; yet where the Devil (that subtile Serpent) hath not totally extinguished the notion of a God, and the necessity of his being worshipped, it has been rather his interest than dis-service, to put the selfish part of the Creature upon sacrificing, wickedly insinuating that none can be freed from sin, and that the performing of Rites, Duties, and Ceremonies, is all God requires, and what is necessary to procure acceptance with him. Thus 'twas that murthering *Cain* became a Sacrificer, whose Sacrifice God rejected, because offered in the fallen unrighteous and accursed Nature. Such also were those Generations who drew near to God with their Lips, and to whom he said of old, *What signifies the multitudes of your Sacrifices? I am full of burnt Offerings, bring no more vain Oblations; Incense is an abomination unto me; the new Moons, and Sabbath; the calling of the Assemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity; even the solemn Meetings I am weary to bear them; and when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear them; your hands are full of blood: wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings,* &c.

Isa. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16

Therefore, O ye Princes, Priests, and People, the solid, necessary, and weighty Question I have to ask you all in the dread & fear of the everlasting, Holy, Lord God Almighty, (by whose eternal Spirit the sence of your present State and Condition I perfectly have received) is this. What Nature, what Heart, what Spirit, and what ground is it in wch your Religions, Faiths, Works, Words and Worships stand and grow? Is it the Divine, not the fallen Nature? Is it the broken, not the stony Heart? Is it the Contrite, not the formal Spirit? Is it the Gospel increasing good, not old *Adams* corrupt thorney Ground? For this

know,

know, that no performances but by clean hands and a pure heart, from whence evil doings are put away, can give acceptance with the pure God.

Come, answer me first, you *Papists*, whose Popes for many hundred years have sat exalted in the hearts of Nations, (God's Temple) above all that is called God: What Scripture ever made a Pope, or gave authority to any one to lord it over the Consciences of others, since Christ enjoyns that Christians should be Brethren? And by what warrantable Tradition can he make, dispose, and depose Civil Empires? Whence came your Creeds but from factious and corrupted Councils, dyed in the blood of those who refus'd conformity? What Scriptures of the Holy Prophets, and Apostles, or any Tradition for the first three hundred years, mention a Mass-Book, speak of *Peter's* Chair, and a successive Infallibility, or that say a Wafer is corporially the flesh, blood and bones, which suffer'd without *Jerusalem?* And where did they adore Images, consume many thousands and millions in building, carving and painting outward Temples, after *Jerusalems* (the Type) was destroyed, whilst thousands of poor Families languished through extream poverty? When did they enjoyn Baby-Baptism, Churching of Women, Marrying by Priests, Holy Water to frighten the Devil, hollowing of Bells to scare evil spirits, making and worshipping of Crosses, erecting of Altars? And where did they command Bowings, institute Musicks, appoint Holy Dayes, Canonize Saints, chaffer and merchandize about Indulgences, pray for the Dead, preach or write for a Purgatory? And what Book or Chapter in the Old or New Testament, mentions the degrees of Popes, Cardinals, Arch-Bishops, Deans, Prebends, Jesuites, Franciscans, Dominicans,

minicans, Urselines, Capuchines, Benedictines, with other such like lazy Nuns and Fryars, for the edification of Christs Church? But above all, when and where did they authorize or indulge your Cruel, Persecuting, Whipping, Racking, Inquisition, Murdering Spirit? Whose Popes, Faith, Church-Government, and whole Religion, were founded, and are maintained by inhumane bloodshed, as your own Histories plainly manifest? — Who gave life to these things but the Devil, who was a murderer from the beginning?

Thus have you *Papists*, through many Generations, *received for Doctrine the Precepts of Men*, who for much speaking, and sacrificing of your own Inventions, expect to be heard, whilst in the lustful, wanton, ignorant, and killing Nature, which has been alwayes shedding the precious blood of those whom God in every Age raised to testifie against your Superstitions & will-Worships; Therefore WOES from God Almighty to that Romish Whore, who has corrupted the Nations, *and sits upon a Scarlet coloured Beast full of names of Blasphemy, drunk with the blood of Saints, and Martyrs of Jesus; the hour of her desolation is nigh, and in the Cup which she hath filled, shall it be fil'd unto her double; for strong is the Lord God of Hosts who judgeth her.*

Mat. 15. 9

Rev. 17. 3, 4, 5. Chap. 18. 6, 8.

Come now, you that are called *Protestants*, however denominated or distinguished, who profess the Scriptures for the Rule of Life and Doctrine, stand your Tryal by them; and first those who are called *Episcopalians*, who date your Religion from the Martyrs: that those who first protested against the darkness and gross Idolatry of the Popish Antichrist, were directed thereto, and supported therein, by the mighty Power of God, is not denyed; and

and that the Seals of blood they set to recommend their Testimonies to posterity, are with us in high esteem, I openly affirm and declare; But that you of the Church of *England* have any more to do with them (who now persecute us) than had the Jews and Pharisees with *Abraham*, *Moses*, and the *Prophets*, *who crucified the Lord of Life*, is as positively disowned: for as they were out of the Life and Spirit of those Holy Men, (though building and garnishing their Sepulchres, and making great profession with their words) insomuch as that they slew those whom God sent in the same Spirit to preach a farther Glory, and to discover a more excellent way; so are you out of the Power and Spirit your fore-Fathers lived and died in, professing their words, but persecuting the same Spirit in others, and crucifying it in your selves: No wonder therefore you have made so little progress since the first dawning of Reformation, being not yet got out of the Borders of *Babylons* form, and altogether in her lustful, proud, persecuting and wicked Nature: For have not you *Protestant* Princes condemned that in others, which you have and do allow in your selves, contrary to your fore-Fathers Protestations? Did you not return severe Persecutions, not onely upon the heads of the Roman Catholicks in Queen *Elizabeth*'s time, who esteemed it Antichristian in them; but even your fellow *Protestants*, who through zeal for God declared against your back-slidings? witness her severity, and what followed in the Reigns of *James*, and the deceased *Charles*, but more particularly the many thousands now of late that have been club'd, bruised, imprisoned, exiled, poisened to death by stinking Dungeons, and ruined in their outward Estates, contrary to Laws, Christian or Humane: Therefore well may I take

Acts 7. 52,59.

take up the lamentation and reproof that was of old, *Ye make men offenders for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the Gate; Ye turn aside the Just for a thing of nought, and lay burthens upon the backs of the Righteous, whilst evil doers pass unpunished; You store up violence in your Pallaces, and many are the oppressed that are amongst you? Yet do not your Priests prophesie smooth things, that sew Pillows under your Arms, and cry Peace? who provoke you to slay those, by executing cruel acts that should not die and preach safety to them that should not live, like greedy Dogs, Shepherds that cannot understand, they all look for gain from their Quarters; they teach for hire, they divine for money, and You all judge for rewards*; for all which abominations God is departed; *Vision is ceased, the Sun is gone down over you, and your day is turned into thick darkness*; Therefore it is you deny the necessity as well as the present enjoyment of Revelation to any, though without it, as Christ saith, *No man can know God, whom to know is Life Eternal*; and place the ground of Divine Knowledge in humane Arts and Sciences, that thereby you may ingross a Function to your selves, and keep up your Trade of yearly gain upon the poor people; preaching sin for tearm of life, thereby rendring invalid the glorious Power of the second *Adam*, and indulging people in transgression; though *he that sins is of the Devil, and without Holiness none shall see God*; Ministers he never sent, but were commissionated by men, void of the Holy Ghost, *and therefore ye profit not the people*; a badge inseparable to lying prophets, who run in their own name.

Isa.29.21 Amos 3. 10. Jer. 23. 17. Ezek.13. 19,20. Isa.56. 10,11. Mic. 3. 5,6,11. Joh.17.3 1John 3. 5,6,7,8. Heb.12. 14. Jer.23. 32.

Come and tell me now, ye of the Church of *England*, that say the Scriptures are your Rule, where do they own such Persecutors, false Prophets, Tythmongers, denyers of

of Revelation, Oppofers of Perfection, Men-pleafers, Time-fervers, unprofitable Teachers, (witnefs the abominations of the Land) Extollers of humane Learning, as the only way to know God; Admirers of Univerfities, (fignal places for idlenefs, loofenefs, prophanenefs, prodigality, and grofs ignorance;) and where do we find the Prophets, Apoftles, and Servants of the Lord, to live in worldly pomp, poffefs hundreds and thoufands a year, be called Lords of their Brethren, and exercife Civil and Spiritual Jurifdiction over the Bodies and Souls of Chriftians in their dayes? Whence came your Forms of Prayers, and Church-Government, from the Scriptures of Truth, and the practice of the Primitive Chriftians, or the Mafs-Book, and Popifh Canons? Where is it that Mafs-Houfes are called Churches? and what prefident do you find for Litanies, Refponfes, Singing, Querifters, Organs, Altars, Bowings, Surplices, fquare Caps, Hoods, Rockets, Fonts, Baby-Baptifm, Holy Dayes, (as you call them) with much more fuch like dirty trafh, and foul Superftition? Are thefe your Scripture Doctrines, and this the Spiritual Worfhip of Holy Jefus, his Apoftles, and the Antient Chriftians? Stand up and anfwer me ye Members of the Church of *England*; but are they not the off-fpring of that Idolatrous Popifh Generation, amounting at beft to will-Worfhip, which is abominable to the God of Heaven, who is now breaking forth in vengeance, to thunder down and confume all the fair Buildings, and pleafant Pictures of Babylonifh Inventions? Therefore from you may I expect an Anfwer to the Queftion I ask'd the Romanifts, In what Nature and Spirit is it, O *Princes*, *Priefts*, and *People*, you hold and pro-

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fess Religion, and Worship towards God? Is it the Divine and Heavenly One which is pure and perfect? Are you Baptized by the Holy Ghost, and with Fire; Crucified through the daily Cross to the World; born again, and your affections set on things above? But alas poor Souls! are you not at, *Have mercy upon us miserable sinners, there is no health in us*, from seven to seventy? And as in truth it is, to the shame of Religion, and destruction of humane Society; How do you abound in evil? Equalizing, if not outstripping Papists & Heathens (against whom you protest in words) in all kinds of impiety: Therefore woe unto you *Protestants, that are mighty to drink strong drink, that give your Neighbours drink, and put the bottle to them that they may be drunk; that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of Violence to come near; that lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch your selves upon your Couches; that eat the fat of the Flock, and drink the sweet of the Vine; that anoint your selves with the chief Ointments; that chant to the sound of the Viol, and invent to your selves Instruments of Musick, but consider not the afflictions of* Joseph. How sport you away your precious time, as if ye were born not to die, at least never to be judged? O what Swearing, what Uncleanness, what Drunkenness, what Prophanation, what Vanity, what Pride, what Expence, what Patching, what Painting, what lascivious Intrigues, what wanton Appointments, what publick unclean Houses, what merry Masks, what lustful insinuating Treats at your Playes, Parks, Mulberry and Spring-Gardens, with whatsoever else may please the lustful eye, and gratifie the wanton mind? Is not this your case and practice, ye Gallants, young and old, Men and Women? And by these courses, have not Debts

Act. 19 2, 3, 4, 5.
Col. 3. 2.
Isa. 15. 11, 22.
Amos 6. 3, 4, 5, 6.

sur-

ſurprized your Eſtates, Poverty Plenty, Diſeaſes Health, Debauchery Chaſtity? Whole Families ruin'd both in Soul and Body; yea, ſuch a deluge of Intemperance has ſo overwhelmed the Nations, that hard it is to light upon ſobriety and virtue. Well my Friends, when I ruminate on theſe things, my heart affects mine eye, and grief overcomes my Soul for yor ſakes; Repent therefore, O ye *Proteſtants*, or elſe know that for all theſe things God Almighty will bring you to Judgment; and in the day that his Indignation ſhall be kindled, your Religion of words ſhall fly away, and your *Lord Lord* cryings ſhall be rejected, becauſe you were ſtrangers to the Spiritual Nature (though bablers of the Name) of true Chriſtianity, and therefore ſhall ye periſh by the Sword. *Mat.7. 21.*

Now as for you *Separatiſts* of divers Names, although I ſhall not diſallow the Zeal that once you had, yet muſt I on God's behalf bear my Teſtimony concerning you; Therefore be it known unto you all, that you are *teaching and receiving for Doctrines the Traditions of men*, running and ſtriving in your own Spirits, *compaſſing your ſelves with the ſparks of your own fire*, being not yet come to ſtand ſtill and know that Will done on Earth which is done in Heaven; You tell people, Chriſt Jeſus has ſuffered and ſatisfied for ſins paſt, preſent, and to come, and though never ſo corrupt, vile, and polluted in themſelves, yet reconciled to, and juſtified in the ſight of God, by his Perſonal Righteouſneſs imputed unto them, and not from a Work of Grace or Regeneration in the Creature; therefore no wonder at your vehement cries againſt a ſtate of perfect ſeparation from ſin, as being a dangerous Doctrine, who preach acceptation with the Holy God, whilſt in an *Iſa.50. 11.*

unholy ſtate; You generally ſcoff at *Revelation* as being ceaſt; moſt of you alſo abetting God to have ordained a Remnant abſolutely to Salvation, & conſequently making ſin as well as torment unavoidably neceſſary to the major part; whereby the Glorious God of Mercy is repreſented more infamouſly unjuſt than the worſt of men; Doctrines of Devils indeed, and grounds of all looſeneſs and Ranteriſm; and tho pleaders, & fighters for Liberty of Conſcience when oppreſt; the greateſt Oppreſſors, when in power, not minding the end of Gods loving kindneſs: but becauſe of your wanton neglect, is your day darkned, and your Sun ſet, and grovelling you are in beggarly Elements, imitations and ſhadows of the Heavenly good things, relating to the diſpenſation of the ſecond Covenant, hoping by your many duties to be heard, and find acceptance, whilſt very ſtrangers to the covering of Gods Spirit, and ignorant of him (whom to know is life Eternal) from the Revelation of his Eternal Spirit, and Operation of his Mighty Power, but from the conceivings and apprehenſions of other men, and Books well reputed, whereby Gods Grace and Light have loſt their Office of leading and teaching; and thus true Counſel becomes darkned, the Fountain ſhut, the Book ſealed, and you in this ſtate ſtrangers unto God, ſo that you periſh for want of ſound knowledge; for I declare and teſtifie on the behalf of Gods everlaſting Way to Life, and againſt you all, that you are yet in the mans ſpirit, which works not Gods Will and Righteouſneſs, being found helpers of the mighty againſt that pure and unchangeable Principle of Light, Grace and Life, in which God only did, does, and will reveal and manifeſt himſelf unto the Sons and Daughters

of

of men, for which cause you are yet in your ups and downs, tossed to and from, not knowing the *Rock of Ages, and Foundation of many Generations*, which is that *only Holy Seed, wherein the Duties and Performances* of all Nations only can be blessed, and from whence proceeds that Pure, Righteous, and Immortal Birth, to whom is the promise of an everlasting Inheritance, but are sticking in your own imaginations, and patching out a peace unto your selves from your Duties, Performances, and the imitations of weak times and seasons in some perishing Observations, that no way relate to the Nature of the *Pure, Spiritual and Internal Kingdom of Peace, Righteousness and Joy in the Holy Ghost*; Therefore well may I say, as once of old, *Woe unto thee* Capernaum, *which art exalted unto Heaven; for if the mighty works that have been done in thee, had been done in* Tyre, Sidon, *or* Sodom, *they would have repented in Dust and Ashes, and would have remained unto this day*. Wherefore O ye zealous Professors, who in the Spirit of a man are striving to comprehend the Mystery of God, unless ye repent and believe in *that Light wherewith Christ hath enlightned every man*, that you may obtain to the true discerning of the Spirit and Nature in which you live and worship, that so you may come to witness the Work and Will of God, *It shall be more tollerable for them in the day that God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; God will make them of the Synagogue of Sathan, who say, they are Christians, and are not*.

Gen. 12. 3. *Gal.* 3. 8 *Rom.* 14 19. *Mat.* 11 23, 24. *Joh.* 1. 9. *Rev.* 3. 9.

Therefore unto you *Princes*, *Priests*, and *People*, whether *Papists* or *Protestants*, or any other separated way, that are in your Idolatry, Superstition, Carnal Ordinances, and will-Worship; whose Faith in, and fear towards God,

God, are grounded on other mens apprehensions, perswasions and precepts, and not from the teaching of God's Holy Spirit or Grace; to you all am I constrained to sound forth & proclaim, That unto us, the most despised, afflicted and forsaken by all the Families of the Earth, is a Child born, unto us a Son is given; We call him *Wonderful Counsellor*, the *Mighty God*, the *Everlasting Father*, the *Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose Government there shall be no end:* this is he the Prophet stiles, *A Light unto the Gentiles, and for Salvation unto the ends of the Earth;* unto whom *John Baptist* bore this certain record, *That he was the true Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the World;* who also gave this testimony of himself, *That whosoever followed him should not abide in darkness, but have the Light of Life, and the Blood of Jesus,* (saith the Beloved Disciple) *shall cleanse you from all sin.* This *is the second* Adam, *the quickning Spirit, the Lord from Heaven, the New and Spiritual Man, the Heavenly Bread, the True Vine; the Flesh and Blood that was given for the Life of the World; the Second Covenant; the Law writ in the Heart and Spirit, put in the inward Parts; the way in which the Fool cannot err; the Truth,* before deceit was; *the Life that's hid in God, eternal in the Heavens, glorified before the World began; the Power, the Wisdom, the Righteousness of God; the Plant of Renown; the Royal Seed that bruiseth the Serpents Head;* in short, *That Grace which hath appeared unto all men, teaching them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live Godlikely, and soberly in this present World.* He stands at the Door of every Heart, and knocks, if by any means he may be heard and have admittance, whereby God's Promise may be fulfill'd, *That God will dwell with Men;*

Isa. 9. 6, 7. *c.* 49. 6.
John 1. 7, 8, 9. *c.* 8. 12.
1 John 1. 7.
1 *Cor.* 15. 47.
John 6. 51, 52, 53
Isa. 42. 6.
Jer. 31. 32, 33, 34.
John 14. 6
1 *Cor.* 1. 20.
Ezek. 34. 29.
Gen. 3. 15
Tit. 2. 11, 12.

Men; and my Testimony is, That a Remnant have obey'd this Heavenly Voice, and now walk in this pure Light in which God Almighty is known to tabernacle with them: Therefore in the fear of God Eternal do I cry aloud unto you all, who are wandering in the by-paths of mens Inventions, Traditions and Precepts, to empty your hearts and minds of those unprofitable Guests, that better entertainment than a Manger may be had to receive this Lord of Glory; *The mighty Prophet all must hear or die, who searcheth the Heart, tryeth the Reins, and is able to tell you all that ever you did:* — This is the *Quakers* Christ, and Son of the Living God, whom we are not ashamed to confess before Men, as that Glorious Light, which since we have believed and walked in, according to our distinct measures, we have not onely received a perfect discovery of all the will-Worships, Pollutions, and vain Fashions, or Customs that have been brought forth by, and stands in, the dark, lustful, and apostatiz'd nature; but as we have continued in a holy watchfulness, to observe and obey its Righteous Dictates; Gods mighty Power we have, and do experience to subdue and redeem therefrom; yea, that Spiritual Blood is sensibly felt to *sprinkle and cleanse the Conscience from dead works.*

Rev. 21 3. *Deut.* 18 18, 19, 20. *Jer.* 17. 10. *John* 4. 29. *Heb.* 9. 14. *ch.* 10. 22.

And to you all must I declare, That by no other way did I ever receive the knowledge of the least evil, or ability to conquer it, than in this universal Light, who is given for a Captain and a Leader out of all the by-paths and petty perswasions of men, through judgment that purifies, and the Red Sea of Troubles, Tryals, and Afflictions, unto the Rest which is pure and undefiled; *This is Gods beloved Son, hear ye him;* For I proclaim, another way there

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is not to eternal Life and Peace, than this everlasting Gospel which now is preached; for the time is come that the Angel of his Presence is flying through the midst of Heaven, having this antient Gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the Earth, and are in their Earthly Nature, Wisdom, and Worships, *Crying with a loud Voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his Judgment is*
Rev. 14 6, 7. *come:* Therefore away away with all your own wayes, works and Worships that are grounded upon mens Command, and fallible apprehensions, whose breath is in their nostrils; and no more do homage according to such prescriptions, but fear and dread the living Lord God of Heaven and Earth; *For if the Righteous scarcely be saved,*
1 Pet. 4 18. *where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? But woe, anguish, tribulation and sorrow shall come upon every Soul that remains in sin.*

Therefore be warned ye dark and Idolatrous *Papists*, ye superstitious and loose *Protestants*, yea zealous, yet carnal Professors, to come out of all your own Wayes, Works, Worships, Nature, Spirit and Practice; In silence and fear to wait in this glorious Light which God Almighty has displayed, and raised us contemned *Quakers* to walk in, and testifie of, in these last Ages; that by believing therein, and circumspectly adhering thereto, you may come to experience the rising of that eternal Power which overcomes and removes transgression, that hath so long separated between you and your God, hereby shall you receive sound Judgment and Heavenly Wisdom; — This will not destroy, but fulfil the Spriptures of Truth, and so shall you know the Baptism that's from above, and eat the Heavenly Bread, and drink the Spiritual Wine at

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Christs Table, in his Kingdom, which the Saints of old saw the coming of before they tasted of death; *For the Kingdom of God is within;* — *Here all old things, Covevenant, Signs, Ordinances, and whatever perisheth with the using,* shall be done away; and the everlasting unchangeable Substance witnessed; and no more shall you profess Religion, or perform Worship from the imagining and transgressing nature, but from a certain sence of Gods own Operation; so shall your Faith stand in that Power the *Gates of Hell can never prevail against:* For this I once more am necessitated to declare, by virtue of the sound knowledge given me of God, that whilst you are fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, and walking after your own will and imaginations, you are altogether strangers to the yoak, to the daily Cross, and self-denying life, but are yet the corrupt Ground, and evil Tree, which bring forth evil Fruits, Thorns, Briars, and sowr Grapes; *Be ye undeceived, God will not be mocked; such as you sow, such shall you reap:* —

Luk 17 20, 21.

Job. 4. 8 *Gal.* 6. 7, 8.

Wherefore I intreat, advise, and warn you all, before the day of your visitation be shut up, in the eternal withdrawings of God's Love, and revelation of his dreadful endless Vengeance, O ye Idolatrous, Superstitious, Carnal, Proud, Wanton, Unclean, Mocking and Persecuting *Princes*, *Priests* and *People*, to repent; Return, return, believe and obey this Light, which manifests and reproves all your evil deeds, that in it you may know your Redemption from the captivity of sin effectually wrought. O tremble and quake with the Prophet *Habakkuk*, you who scoff at *Quakers*, *that you may all rest in the day of trouble.*

Hab. 3. 16.

But if you ſhall ſtill go on to rebel againſt the reproofs and inſtructions of this Holy Light, and deſpiſe and perſecute the Children of it; be it known to you all, that before the brightneſs of its Glory ſhall your ſhadows vaniſh, your imitations fly away, your beggerly Elements melt, and you die in your ſins.

Nor ſhall we be ſollicitous what your intentions are concerning us, well knowing him in whom we have believed, *to be much greater in us than he that is in the World*, who in love hath call'd us out of it, and we doubt not will by his everlaſting Arm of ſtrength defend and preſerve us over all oppoſition, and by us exalt his Name, Truth, and Salvation unto the ends of the Earth.

2 *Tim.* 1. 12. 1 *John* 4. 4.

Therefore let the Winds of Imagination blow, the ſtorms of Perſecution beat, and the Sea of raging malice foam; Yea, *though the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither Fruit be in the Vines; though the labour of the Olive fail, and the Fields yeeld not their meat; though the Flock be cut off from the Fold, and there be no Herd in the Stalls*; though Nations ſhould combine againſt us, and multitudes aſſemble themſelves to our overthrow; — Yet, be it reported to the Nations, and let it be told unto the people, that we ſhall ſtill confide and rejoyce in that everlaſting Holy God Almighty, Lord of Hoſts, and King of Saints, who hath gathered us; and therefore is by us over all Things in Heaven, and things on Earth, bleſt and renown'd for ever.

Hab. 3. 17, 18.

THE END.